



William Williams.

H I N T S
TO THE
PUBLIC AND THE LEGISLATURE,
ON THE
NATURE AND EFFECT
OF
Evangelical Preaching.

BY A BARRISTER.

PART THE FIRST.

FOURTH EDITION.

—“I am astonished at the tranquil courage of any man who can quietly see that a loaded cannon is brought to bear upon him, and that a fool is sitting at its touch-hole with a lighted match in his hand. And yet, my Lords, upon a little reflection, what is it, after what we have seen, that should surprise us, however it may shock us?—What have the last ten years of the world been employed in, but in destroying the landmarks of rights, duties, and obligations; in substituting sound in the place of sense; in substituting a vile and canting methodism in the place of social duty and practical honour; in suffering virtue to evaporate into phrase, and morality into hypocrisy and affectation?”

CURRAN'S *Speech in the Cause of the King against Johnson*, Feb. 4th, 1805.

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H I N T S,

&c.

WHEN we behold a gradual but striking alteration unfolding itself in the manners and morals of a people, it is matter of some curiosity, since we are touched so nearly by the effects, that we examine a little into the cause. We have nearly a million of inhabitants in this metropolis alone;—if, therefore, any large number of persons, acting with united force and with one impulse upon the MORALS of this vast body, and elevating themselves into the high and awful station of public Teachers, by degrees get the direction of the mind, and the disposal of the conscience, of all the lower or-

ders of which this vast community is composed, it is worth our while to inquire a little into the actual *nature*, that we may determine somewhat of the probable *effect*, of the principles which this body of spiritual Directors inculcate. —It is matter of prudence, as well as curiosity, to ascertain what shape the popular mind is likely to take, when, in due season, it shall come out of the mould in which it is thus to be cast.

One generation, says Solomon, passeth away, and another generation cometh.—Whether each has improved upon the former, it might be difficult to decide ; but, however this may be, there seems to be still room for improvement, whatever may be the velocity with which we are speeding towards perfection.

Many and various, in the present generation, are the new systems to which the old have given place. We have a new system of agriculture—a new system of gardening—a new system of physic—a new system of politics—and, to crown the catalogue, we have a New System of RELIGION ; a system which bids fair to explode the old, and to answer fully all the expectations of those who have framed it.

Thanks to the indefatigable zeal of these NEW REFORMERS, we are fast emerging from a state of *moral* darkness to a blaze of *marvellous* light; and this light is fast spreading itself into every mind which its rays can be made to penetrate.

Novelty has been justly termed the spice of life. We have had the old Gospel for upwards of eighteen centuries, and the *moral law* contained in it was, to our pious forefathers, the rule of life. Taking that Gospel for their guide, they were taught that this present world was a state of trial—that every man had certain talents committed to him, some ten, some five, some one—that to whom much was given, from him much would be required—and that all were accountable hereafter for the abuse of the talents, or means of improvement, respectively received.—And the Preacher of *that* Gospel, when in those days he assembled his congregation together, exhorted them to an earnest and un-failing attention to this their future responsibility; he urged them never to degrade that nature which God had dignified with the noble gift of reason, but so to act as not to shew

themselves unworthy of that invaluable privilege, but apply it to the noble purposes for which it was bestowed.—The obvious duty of conforming to this advice was *then* felt, and a frequent meditation upon the consequences of neglecting it served to strengthen their resolutions to shun whatever might tempt them to disregard it.

We are weak enough to call these the good old times. Alas! they were sadly unsound in the faith. This primitive pastor, in the simplicity of his heart, fancied himself in the discharge of his duty; he never dreamed that all this made no part of his sacred office. Let us attend to one of the NEW GOSPEL-PREACHERS, that we may learn from themselves, and in their own words, how the duty of reforming vice is to be discharged, and in what manner the wicked are to be entreated to turn from their wickedness, and live.

“I shall not declaim,” says Dr. Hawker, “on the moral excellence of human nature, while our church prayers with one voice continually declare that we have no health, no excellence, in us; neither shall I recommend human

strength to exert itself in acts of moral virtue towards their own salvation*.”

When it is thus publicly announced, that the new Gospel-preachers will *not recommend* what the apostles of the old Christian dispensation *recommended*, and that too most strongly and most strenuously, and which they enforced by all the motives and all the sanctions which that dispensation reveals, we can readily perceive how enticing such an assurance must be, and what a concourse such an intimation must draw together. Dr. Hawker accordingly is followed by his crowd of *dear hearers*, whenever his visit to London from Plymouth is made known amid the congregations of the faithful.

MR. COLQUHOUN, in his excellent and valuable Treatise on the POLICE OF THE METROPOLIS, informs us, (and his information is warranted by a pretty correct estimate,) that in this city of

* Solemn Questions for Serious Christians, by Robert Hawker, D. D. Vicar of Charles, Plymouth. The better to extend the numerous tracts of these Evangelical Divines, their price is adapted to the lower classes. The tract from which they may derive the above intelligence is price two-pence, or 12s. 6d. per hundred, to *those who buy them to give away*.

London, including all classes of criminal and depraved persons, “above twenty thousand individuals rise every morning, without knowing how or by what means they are to be supported through the passing day, and, in many instances, where they are to lodge the succeeding night.” Should any one or more among those wretched victims of vice and imprudence, when left to solitude and their own conscience, feel such a degree of remorse and penitence as should lead them into a place of worship, it is to be hoped that they would there find some humane *moral* Teacher, who would dissuade them from vice by an affecting display of its consequences, would teach them how virtuous habits may best be formed, and evil temptation best overcome;—who would adjure them, as they value their present and eternal peace, to forsake for ever their accustomed haunts of wickedness, and strive to support themselves by honest labour, that by their future amendment of life they may lay a foundation of hope for that pardon which is promised only to contrite and penitent offenders.—This *moral* preacher would be encouraged so to do, not only by the dic-

tates of his own heart, but also by the animating words of that apostle*, who has said : “ Brethren, if any one of you do err from the truth, and one convert him, let him know that he who converteth a sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.”—But the new *Evangelical* Reformer, not satisfied with silently neglecting to convert the ignorant and unhappy criminal from the error of his way—not content with forbearing to urge him to use the *means* of grace, that he may attain the *hope* of glory, circulates a public notice and acknowledgment, in the shape of a pamphlet, that HE SHALL NOT RECOMMEND HUMAN STRENGTH TO EXERT ITSELF IN ACTS OF MORAL VIRTUE TOWARDS ITS OWN SALVATION.

Having paused a little, to reflect on the intelligence thus sent forth to circulate itself into all the alleys and bye-streets, and among all the lower orders in this overgrown capital, let us attend a little further to this Evangelical Doctor’s declaration of what he *will not* do.

* James 5. 19.

It is taken from the same little Manual of Piety in which the former is recorded.—“ If (says he) I do from my heart believe in *our* church doctrine, of the fallen, sinful, helpless, miserable state of human nature, *all the* parts of my preaching, as well as my conduct in the world, will carry with it a suitable correspondence.”

It must obviously be of prodigious benefit to the community that all should be made to believe in this *Evangelical* doctrine, that God made them originally sinful and depraved, if, as we are told, “ the conduct will carry *with it a suitable correspondence* ;” and the ikelihood that it will do so is certainly very great, since it is every way calculated to produce that effect. It might perhaps be more serviceable, since “ it is God that hath made us, and not we ourselves,” if, instead of vilifying him by debasing and sinking into contempt the work of his hands, we strived to preserve our minds as pure, and our conduct as irreproachable, as in the days of our infancy.—If we look abroad into the world, we shall find little difficulty in accounting for the depravity that may be seen on

all sides, without placing it to the account of the great Author of Nature.

For my part, I do not hesitate to say, that, with respect to the *origin* of that *corruption* which is so very visible amongst us, I prefer the plain intelligible account. as given by that very worthy and valuable magistrate, MR. COLQUHOUN, to all the mysterious jargon and blasphemous nonsense that CALVIN and his followers ever uttered, from his days to the present.

“ Poverty (says this sound practical writer) is no where to be found clothed in so great a degree with the garb and emblems of the extremest misery and wretchedness as in London.

“ Were we to examine the history of any given number of these our miserable fellow-mortals, it would be discovered that these distresses, almost in every instance, have been occasioned by extravagance, idleness, profligacy, and crimes—and that their chief support is by gambling, cheating, and thieving in a little way.

“ Allured and deceived by the opportunities which the pawnbrokers and the old-iron shops

afford, to enable labouring people, when they marry, and first enter upon life, to raise money upon whatever can be offered as a pledge, or for sale, the first step with too many is generally to dispose of wearing apparel and household goods ; and this is frequently done on the slightest occasion, rather than forego the usual gratification of a good dinner and a hot supper. Embarrassments are the speedy consequence of this line of conduct, which is often followed up by idleness and inactivity. The alehouse is then resorted to as a desperate remedy, where the lazy and dissolute will always find associates, who, being unwilling to labour, resort to crimes for the purpose of supplying an unnecessary extravagance.

“ It is truly pitiable to behold the abject condition of the numerous classes of profligate parents, who, with their children, are, from invincible and growing habit, constantly to be found in the tap-rooms of public houses, spending in two days as much of their earnings as would support them a week comfortably in their own dwellings ; destroying their health, wasting their time, and *rearing up their children* to be

prostitutes and thieves, before *they can distinguish between right and wrong.*

“ In the city of London, and within the bills of mortality, there are at present 5,204 licensed public houses, and it is calculated that the money expended in beer and spirits by the labouring people only is upwards of three millions sterling a year.

“ A moment’s reflection (he adds) will shew how much these unfortunate habits lead to *destroy the moral principle*, and to engender crimes.”

Now it may be very *Evangelical* to trace all this mass of enormity up to the Author of *our NATURE* as its first cause, but it is certainly not very prudent, nor very pious, to preach in the ears of all these profligate parents, that this their shocking state of *depravity* is *original*, and not the effect of acquired habit ; that they are sinners by *nature*, and not in consequence of *corrupt example* and *wilful* misconduct, because, having once taken this *Gospel*, it will furnish them with an unfailing apology for their vices, and send them back well satisfied to return again to their old haunts : for they will

reason thus,—If to sin is *our nature*, then to sin is not blamable, any more than for a bird to fly, or a duck to swim, for such is *their nature*; and their conduct, like ours, does but carry with it a *suitable correspondence*.—When such doctrines are delivered for the instruction of the lower classes, and pressed upon them as making the most important and essential article of the Christian faith, they must immediately perceive that all this *sin*, in every deformed shape which it assumes in London and elsewhere, is very *natural*, and that of course the reverse of all this would be very *unnatural*, and they will be too *Evangelical* to act in opposition to *nature*.

There are two hundred and forty-six places of worship of the established religion in this metropolis.—“When it is recollected (says Mr. Colquhoun, in his Treatise before cited) that large sums are annually expended by societies instituted for promoting religion, virtue, and good morals, it must be evident, as the miseries of the poor do not appear to be alleviated, and their **MORALS** grow worse—that there must be **SOME CAUSE** to produce effects so opposite to

what might have been expected from such unparalleled philanthropy.”—

We shall, perhaps, presently be able to conjecture to what cause this may be in a great measure ascribed. If those who term themselves *Evangelical* Preachers, instead of enforcing the *moral duties* of men in society, preach to all the lower orders doctrines which go directly to *destroy them*, (which I shall proceed to prove their doctrines must do, if they have any practical influence at all,) can it be wondered at that the *morals* of the rising generation should grow worse? When a Clergyman of the old stamp assembled his flock round him, he taught them, above all things, to shun idleness, as containing in it every temptation to vice; he pressed them to beware of evil company, and evil example:—“Enter not (was his text) into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men: avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away*”—This Gospel, which was not the Gospel of CALVIN, but the moral Gospel of GOD, nowhere taught him that mankind have *naturally* no power at all

* Prov. 4. 13, 15.

to do any thing that is good, and are wholly and utterly helpless. HE worshipped a Being who did not command and expect obedience without giving the power to obey, and that Being he taught others to worship, and that power he earnestly prayed them to exert.—This Christian Preacher did not lull his hearers into a false security by leading them to expect a supernatural change in some *future* day of *grace* : but assured them, and the authority which he urged carried conviction with it, that “ the *grace of God, which bringeth salvation, HATH APPEARED to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world* *.”—But it seems the *Evangelical* system of teaching asserts, that mankind, being utterly helpless, and incapable of doing any good, must hear no exhortation to that purpose. Instead, therefore, of urging those motives to repentance which the Bible contains, and which can alone lead to any reformation, this popular *Gospel* Preacher enters his express protest against any such attempt.—“ Confessing myself and people,

* Paul's Epistle to Titus, 2. 11, 12.

while in the *desk*, to be *helpless* sinners before God, I SHALL NOT, in the *pulpit*, cry up the moral rectitude of human nature, nor, in defiance of my own solemn declarations, contend that man *is able* of himself to help himself, and exhort the congregation to do that, which, just before, we all declared we are *incapable of doing* *.”

But if the *Preacher* cannot help us, and we cannot help *ourselves*, for what use are churches erected at all? If the whole body of the people should once imbibe this Evangelical sentiment, they will soon begin to think the *good estate* of the Catholic church much too ample for its means of service. If the whole swarm of thieves, gamblers, swindlers, and pick-pockets, which infest our streets by night and by day, are to be taught that they cannot *help* being what they are, and are *incapable*, of themselves, of being otherwise, and that a Minister of the Church of England shall professedly *forbear* exhorting bad men to amendment of life, conceiving it repugnant to his duty as a *Gospel Preacher*, the mass of public corruption

* Solemn Questions, &c. p. 7.

will augment pretty rapidly, and that profligacy which already prevails to such an extent will daily widen its influence; for when you have furnished the whole race of delinquents, of every description, with this doctrine—"that they can do nothing of themselves to help themselves,"—they will soon follow it up to the conclusion to which it leads, which is, that their guilt cannot be *wilful*, for, if they *cannot* help themselves, the fault is IN HIM who could give them the power, but withholds it.—These Calvinistic teachers do well to suppress, as far as they are able, the exercise of *reason*; thus far the public have cause to be thankful, for certainly their *Evangelical* premises lead to very dangerous conclusions.

"Why stand ye here all the day idle?" said the lord of the vineyard; they said unto him, "Because no man hath hired us." Surely, had they been brought up under an *Evangelical* Teacher, they would have made a very different reply.—"Because we have no *natural power to work*" would have been their answer; "to hire us would be useless, for, having no power to help *ourselves*, still less have we a power to

help *others*.”—But, in this beautiful parable, our SAVIOUR teaches an important *moral* truth, which this *helpless* order of sinners would do well to remember—that he did not live and die to leave them an EXAMPLE they were unable to follow, nor would have commanded any man to TAKE UP his cross if he had not strength to support it.

If the *Evangelical* CHURCHMEN* are so fully convinced that “man can do nothing of himself,” why do they who hold this doctrine receive their tithes, or the *Evangelical* DISSENTING MINISTERS their maintenance, at the hands of those whom they cannot assist?—If a Preacher of this stamp really holds this fundamental tenet of Calvinism, why does he not speak out at once fairly and intelligibly, and say,—“I can take no tithes, I can accept no salary; it would be deceiving you to say that I can help you, or that you can help yourselves; if I could *co-operate* in your moral reformation, I would not

* See Overton’s ‘True Churchman ascertained.’ A curious title this; it seems to admit the test which “ascertains a *true* CHURCHMAN to be different from that which ascertains a *true* CHRISTIAN.

hesitate to accept the reward of my service, but it is the *sole* operation of irresistible grace, which will work in due season, and for that season you must wait?"—Now surely this would be more honest and more honourable than to set up as a guide to the benighted travellers of this lower world, and levy a contribution upon them, while you confess yourself of no more use than a dark lanthorn. We expect this kind of candour and liberality from a physician, and, to the credit of the profession be it spoken, we usually witness it. If he pronounces it to be a *helpless* case, he declines taking a fee, because he conceives it to be unjust to fill his purse at the expense of those to whom he can be of no utility.—I confess I do not see why those, who declare they can do nothing towards restoring our *souls' health*, should not act in the same spirit of justice. I know no reason that can be given why the College of *Evangelical Physicians* should have less moral honesty than the College of Warwick-lane.

This doctrine, moreover, is as dangerous in its consequences as it is absurd in its principle. It puts a weapon in the hands of the IN-

FIDEL, the most fatal to the security of civil life ; it goes, in fact, to DENY THE EXISTENCE OF ALL MORAL OBLIGATION ; for to affirm that our ability is not equal to our duty, is, in effect, to declare that we have NO DUTY, since no man can be under either a legal or moral obligation *to do* that which he has *no power to do* ; the command would be as foolish as it would be tyrannical. Can it be the duty of a dumb man to speak ?—Would it not border on insanity to request an answer from one whom we knew had no power of speech ?—Would any one tell a man that had no use in his limbs, that it was his duty to take exercise ?—It would be mockery. It is clear then, that, unless we have a power to obey, the duty of obedience cannot exist. The doctrine, therefore, which *denies* that we have the one, *releases* us from the other.

View it in what light we may, it carries the mind to conclusions equally fatal. If we have no power of ourselves to do that which is right, we cannot be accountable hereafter [for doing that which is wrong. We are thus led either to deny the *justice* of God, or to reject the doctrine of a future responsibility. Being

thus led to deny *one* attribute of God, the existence of all the rest are brought into suspicion. Thus it is that doctrines repugnant to reason begin by making the inquirer a SCEPTIC, and end in making him an ATHEIST.

TRUTH is well compared by Lord Bacon to a diamond, which shews best in varied lights. It must therefore be doing an acceptable service to place it in different positions, that we may have a better opportunity to admire it.—It is this acceptable service which I am endeavouring to render to Evangelical doctrines.

But there is one difficulty in the way of this endeavour, which I must take leave to remark, and it is this:—REASON, we all know, is the test of truth; but whenever this test is applied to what is termed *Evangelical* truth, and it will not stand the trial, the defenders of this doctrine immediately vilify it; it is *carnal* reason, and has no concern with these inquiries. Now give me leave to say, that this phrase, though perpetually in the mouth of these Evangelical preceptors, is utter nonsense; as well might we talk, only that our ears are not accustomed to it, of *crooked* straightness, and *diseased* health.

The phrase *carnal* REASON is just as contradictory, and, therefore, just as absurd. I am aware, that it would be a great loss if this phrase were taken away from the common stock, because it is so useful, when hard pressed, to silence inquiry; for the rule seems to be, with regard to a reasoner, if you cannot satisfy his mind, you must stop his mouth. Without some such contrivance, error would never make its way into the world.—When the Catholic Divines, of past ages, differed respecting the *mysteries* of their faith, they referred the decision, as in duty bound, to the Pope; but his Holiness, who knew that the less *carnal* REASON pried into the *mysteries* the better, wisely enjoined silence on both parties.

I content myself with throwing out this remark to the reflective mind, and return to the subject.

Mr. COLQUHOUN, in his Treatise on the Police of the Metropolis, makes the following recapitulation of his estimate of the persons who are supposed to *support* themselves by pursuits either criminal, illegal, or immoral.

*AN ESTIMATE of the Annual Amount and Value
of the Depredations committed on Public and
Private Property, in the Metropolis and its
Vicinity, IN ONE YEAR; specifying the Na-
ture of such Depredations under Six different
Heads, viz.*—*

1. Small Thefts	£710,000
2. Thefts upon the Rivers and Quays	250,000
3. Thefts in the Dock-yards, &c. in the Thames	200,000
4. Burglaries, Highway Robberies, &c.	280,000
5. Coining base Money	310,000
6. Forging Bills, Swindling, &c.	250,000
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Total	£2,000,000
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“ The foregoing Estimate, grounded on the best information that can be procured, exhibits a melancholy picture of the general depravity which prevails; and which is heightened in a considerable degree by the reflection, that, among the perpetrators of the crimes there

* As this Treatise is in every body's hands, I refrain from transcribing the detail, but refer the reader to the work itself.

particularized, are to be numbered persons, who, from their rank and situation in life, would scarcely be suspected of either committing or conniving at frauds, for the purpose of enriching themselves at the expense of the nation *.”

In what, let us ask, does all this mass of evil originate?—Does it not originate in the breach of those *moral* duties which are the sum and substance of *true religion*?—It is utterly impossible that government can be long held together if this dreadful catalogue continues to increase. But increase it *will*, increase it *must*, if the inhabitants of that great city in which this system of profligate immorality prevails, instead of being taught to shudder at the transgression of those *moral duties*, the neglect of which it is that produces this shocking catalogue of crimes just now brought under our view; if, instead of being taught that the reward of eternal life is promised only to those who persevere in well-doing, and that, unless they strive by obedience to merit that reward, they will assuredly lose it in that day when

* Treatise on the Police of the Metropolis, p. 609, 6th Ed.

God will judge the world in righteousness, and give to every man according to his WORKS: if, I say, instead of this, they are to be told and assured, from the *press* and from the *pulpit*, that no qualification of *merit* is necessary; that they may multiply their offences to what degree they please; that the seducer, the gambler, the drunkard, the prostitute, the sharper, the robber, may all proceed in their career of infamy, that their lives cannot be too impure, or their offences too many or too aggravated; for that, when once the weapon of sin shall fall from their hands, (and this it must do, when thus, worn out in the service of sin, they are too weak to hold it,) they will not be precluded, by this their long catalogue of crimes, from the offered rewards of the Gospel, for that the Gospel does not suspend its favour on the performance of any *moral* duties whatever.

Is it possible such a doctrine can be taught?!!!
Attend to the words of the EVANGELICAL PREACHER:—"As *no merit induced* God to be thus bountiful, so *no demerit prevents* man from receiving such clemency. These indeed are glorious tidings of good things, and great joy to

all people, to tell a poor sinner that NO SINS ARE TOO GREAT, NO LIFE TOO IMPURE, NO OFFENCES TOO GREAT OR TOO AGGRAVATED, when once the weapons of sin are fallen out of his hands, to prevent the blessed influence of Gospel mercies. But only reverse the case, and SUPPOSE *that some qualification of merit is necessary* in the objects of his favour, and that these mercies *are suspended on the performance of such and such duties*, what a VAST ALTERATION would it make in the circumstances of the Gospel *.”—

Thus it seems that all those abandoned profligates and hardened offenders, which are the corruption and curse of human society, are not accountable for the neglect of any duties, as men and as Christians, for they had NO DUTIES TO DISCHARGE, NOR IS THE FAVOUR OF HEAVEN SUSPENDED ON THE PERFORMANCE OF THEM !!!

We have, it appears, for eighteen hundred years, deceived ourselves by the old Gospel into a belief that our DUTY towards God, and our DUTY towards our neighbour, really existed, and

* See Dr. Hawker's "Prop against all Despair," p. 10.

were duties most essentially binding upon mankind, and that on our obedience to or neglect of them depended our happiness or misery in a future state! Our *Saviour*, in his comprehensive and beautiful Sermon on the Mount, sums up the MORAL DUTIES to which the conduct of a Christian must conform itself, if he would enjoy that felicity in a future state, which HE most solemnly *suspended on the performance of them*. And he adds, with an energy that is awful—
 “ Whosoever shall *break one* of these commandments, and shall *teach men so*, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of Heaven; but whosoever shall *do*, and *teach them* the same, shall be called great in the kingdom of Heaven.”

Let us listen then to the EVANGELICAL effrontery with which the existence of these duties is again DENIED, and this threat despised. Observe in what a decisive tone of deception the Preacher personates the Saviour of the World, and with what easy assurance he affirms away the truth, and puts his *own Gospel* in its place.

“ WISDOM crieth aloud, not in the temple only, and the courts of the Lord’s house, but in the streets and the lanes of the city, among

the graceless, the idle; they who are too graceless to attend the ordinances of duty, and too idle to be concerned for their own salvation. And when Jesus calls, observe who they are he calls. He says, If any man thirst—If any man hear my voice: He doth not say, If any good man, or any moral man; but *any* man.—As if he had said, I will have my offer made among such as the world may fancy too worthless to be made partakers of my salvation, and too far lost to be recovered. Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. The single qualification I expect is, to believe the Gospel: for he that believeth shall be saved. And even that belief my Spirit will bestow. He maketh my people willing in the day of his power. All that the Father giveth me shall come to me. And he that cometh I will in no wise cast out. Observe again the extensiveness, the freedom, the sovereignty of his grace. *All* that the Father giveth. Not one, or two, or ten thousand, but *ALL*. And they *shall* come. What, if they do such and such *DUTIES*? *Not a word of the kind*. What, if they perform such obligations? *Not a syllable*.

like it. It is an absolute promise of the Lord Jesus, founded in his own absolute power.—Here are neither *ifs* nor *buts*. No conditions, nor terms. They shall come *.”

Such is the compendious system of Evangelical *faith*. The *single* qualification expected is, to *believe the Gospel*; as to practising its duties, that is wholly out of the question, for there are none to be practised. “*No CONDITIONS, no TERMS. No IFS and ANDS.*” Only BELIEVE, and the whole road to Heaven is laid level before you. Never indeed was a system so well suited to the wants of all classes of sinners, whose names are to be found in the REGISTERS of the OLD BAILEY. It is good news, and they will no doubt search the Evangelical Gazettes again and again, to learn the “precious truth,” that, notwithstanding the thousands they have ruined by their infamous practices of fraud and depredation, they have still as good a chance and as sure a title to salvation as the best of men.

* “Prop to Despair.” This Tract, printed separately at a cheap price for the poor, is to be found in the Collection of Dr. Hawker’s Works, volume the 6th, p. 122.

Each will triumphantly join chorus in the song placed for him, by the Reverend Divine himself, at the end of his Instruction-Book :—

“ There is a *fountain filled with blood,*
Drawn from Emmanuel's veins,
 And SINNERS *plunged beneath that flood*
 LOSE ALL THEIR GUILTY STAINS.
 The dying Thief rejoiced to see
 That fountain in his day ;
 And there have *I*, as well as he,
 WASH'D ALL MY SINS AWAY.”

The Psalmist says of the wicked man, “that he delighteth in blood ;” he will therefore be readily enough persuaded to wash himself clean in the *element* of his corruption. His reason will not be shocked, nor his faith staggered, to find this element *consecrated* to so extraordinary a purpose.

The community cannot but wish well to the progress of a system of instruction, which tends so greatly to the suppression of vice and the spread of morality !!! We cannot but be sanguine in our hopes of reformation, when the word of proclamation delivered weekly from the pulpits, and dispersed daily in cheap tracts to all classes of society, is—

To the SEDUCER—You have betrayed many

that once were innocent, and have brought down many a father's grey hairs with sorrow to the grave ; but, add one more victim, for *your life cannot be too impure*, and then—*take refuge in a Redeemer.*

To the ROBBER--You have corrupted many an honest mind by your example, and ruined many an honest man, by your villany ; but YOUR CRIMES CANNOT BE TOO MANY OR TOO AGGRAVATED ; commit one more fraud on the public, and then—lay hold on the cross.

To the MURDERER—YOUR SINS CANNOT BE TOO GREAT—dip your hands once more in the blood of your fellow-creatures, and then—WASH THEM WHITE IN THE BLOOD OF THE LAMB.

Such is the plain, distinct, intelligible language of Evangelical teaching—such are the principles propagated by means of the press throughout the whole extent of the kingdom—such are the lessons which are taught to the profligate of every class, and sent into the world at a price that may bring the purchase within the reach of that description of persons to whose reception it is fitted—such is the

new Gospel faith instilled into the ears of the ignorant in the numerous, and annually increasing, meeting-houses of its professors—such is the Evangelical doctrine which is daily multiplying its converts and its congregations, while it thins every church of God in which the MORAL duties of man are inculcated, and in which the infinitely serious evils to the sinner and to society, which attend the breach of those duties, are faithfully impressed.

On this subject let me quote the well-warranted observations of the DEAN of PETERBOROUGH, whose experience qualified him to pronounce upon the actual existence and extent of the evil he laments.

—“It is a well-known fact that in several parts of this country the common people will scarce listen to the sermon of their Parish Minister, unless the subject of it be some point of doctrine; and that all preaching, on other subjects, is sneeringly spoken of as ‘good MORAL preaching.’ Should any person take the trouble to inquire, and inform himself, what are the causes and the consequences of this dislike, he would find, I believe, on inquiry, First, that

in the parishes where this dislike prevails, the common people are EGREGIOUSLY MISLED in matters of religion ; and misled, on this most important subject, not only by a numerous tribe of SECULAR ITINERANTS, but by some also of our REGULAR CLERGY : Secondly, that those deluded and misguided people, who thus express their dislike and contempt of ‘ MORAL PREACHING,’ know just as much what it means as Mr. Wilkes’s rabble, about the year 1765, understood of those general warrants which they so vehemently exclaimed against, and no more : Thirdly, that considerable pains have been taken of late to inform the commonality of this, that *moral* sermons have been reprobated by some of our Bishops in their charges : and, Lastly, that, if the Minister of a Parish perseveres in his bounden duty of explaining to his parishioners the Ten Commandments, and of preaching against all sorts and all degrees of *immoral* conduct, such of his congregation as have heard from those strolling preachers ‘ who creep into houses, and lead captive silly women, laden with sins,’ that this is not GOSPEL-PREACHING, quit the Established

Church, and resort to the Conventicle ; where they are sure of not being molested with sermons against *immorality*, and are assured of salvation by FAITH ALONE *.”—

The plain truth is, that to promise the reward of a good life only to those who lead a good life, and to make the threats of the Gospel “ a terror to evil-doers,” will never be so acceptable to evil-doers as a system of faith which assures the licentious, unprincipled, and immoral,—“ that the rich tide of mercy flows continually, without ebbing; that it is not enough to say that it washes on the shore of the undeserving, but it reaches to the ground of the *ill-deserving*; *not barely to those who have done nothing* to merit mercy, but even to those who have done *every thing* to merit punishment,—It rises, therefore, above high-water mark, overflows all bounds, and overtops even the tallest mountains of *corruption* †.”—

* Thomas Kipling, D. D. Dean of Peterborough, and late Fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge.—Vide “ Articles of the Church proved not to be Calvinistic,” n. 67.

† See Dr. Hawker's “ Prop to Despair,” p. 6. This Tract is to be found in the 6th Volume of his Works. It

Surely such cheering news will never want a congregation of sinners to listen to it. The words of our Saviour, who makes the future happiness of men to depend on their fulfilling the terms and conditions on which the offer of salvation to sinful man was made, who says "If ye forgive men their trespasses, your Heavenly Father will also forgive you; But if ye forgive not them their trespasses, neither will your Heavenly Father forgive you." This moral discourse, these *ifs* and *buts*, will never be relished, when a faithful Doctor of the new divinity will assure them there are *none*, and that the grace of God "RISES HIGHER AND HIGHER, IN PROPORTION AS THE MISERABLE OBJECTS OF SIN AND INIQUITY HAVE SUNK LOWER AND LOWER *."—The whole rabble from Wapping, from St. Giles's, and from every haunt of vice and debauchery in all quarters, will flock round the messenger of a doctrine so suitable to their wishes and their wants.

No profligate amongst them could have hit

is printed separately, on common paper, for the use of the lower orders, that its price may forward its circulation.

* Dr. Hawker's "Prop against all Despair."

upon a system so well contrived and fitted to the habits of all those, who, lost to virtue and decency, are daily sinking themselves *lower and lower* in sin and iniquity; and joyous, indeed, must they be to learn, that, instead of increasing the anger of Heaven against their offences, these offences, on the contrary, raise the grace or favour of the Almighty *higher and higher*.

The tendency of all this gross misconception, and scandalous misrepresentation, of the moral truths of Christianity, it is not very difficult to discover; if they are not only to remain uncontroverted, but every week, and almost every day of the week, are repeated again and again in the ears of the idle and ignorant poor in this populous kingdom, the result, as sure as we exist as a people, will be, the gradual abolition of all that remains of moral goodness amongst us.—In fact, they are taught, in plain terms, that moral goodness is completely superfluous.—“The Gospel (says the Evangelical Minister) is a covenant of *grace*, and not of works, in which Jehovah

intended to display the infinite greatness of his character, in giving pardon, mercy, and peace, *without terms, and without conditions*, on the part of the poor creature who becomes the object of it. *So that every idea of MORAL GOODNESS, as a qualification for obtaining it, IS DONE AWAY *.*"

If there are any ATHEISTIC parents, whose children, immersed as they may be in vice and villany, have not quite extinguished every sentiment of virtue, they cannot better complete them in the discipline of depravity, than by putting *Evangelical* tracts, of the above tendency, into their hands.—Not even the Jacobin Societies of France can furnish their agents in this kingdom with any doctrines better calculated to banish the fear of a future retribution, and to annihilate all the binding obligations and solemn sanctions of the Gospel. No system of doctrine, that ever yet was acted upon, could more effectually revolutionize the whole moral world than this system, the

* Dr. Hawker's "Prop against all Despair," p. 15.

teachers of which have proudly appropriated to themselves the title of **EVANGELICAL MINISTERS.**

It would be well if these Reverend Gentlemen would explain to the world what it is they mean when they declare the Gospel to be—"a COVENANT *of grace*, WITHOUT TERMS, and WITHOUT CONDITIONS,"—since it is the very essence of a *covenant*, of every kind, that it should contain *conditions*, on the performance of which its validity depends.—It is of great importance that this matter should be rightly understood, since it is most essential that in this town of London, where theft, adultery, robbery, murder, fraud, and every species of vice, abounds—that it should not be publicly proclaimed, and privately taught, that the *abstaining from all this* MAKES NO PART OF THAT COVENANT WHICH THE GOSPEL CONTAINS; which must be true if it is a covenant WITHOUT TERMS OR CONDITIONS. It would be well, at least for the sake of society, if these *faithful Preachers* would not persuade the multitude wholly to throw aside that covenant contained in the Gospel of the New Testament,

which HAS terms and conditions, and which teaches us that the only way to find acceptance with God is by doing his will—A covenant, the terms of which are thus distinctly declared—
 IF YE WOULD ENTER INTO LIFE, KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS—A covenant, the CONDITION of which our Saviour has himself most solemnly proclaimed, and, with equal solemnity, denounced the awful consequences attending the breach of it—EXCEPT ye repent, ye *shall* ALL likewise PERISH.

It cannot but be a source of immense delight and exultation to the many thousands that exist by daily depredations on the public to be assured that they cannot by these means forfeit their claim to that PARDON, MERCY, and PEACE, thus UNCONDITIONALLY bestowed. This class of persons will not fail to say of the Evangelic Instructor, that he “reasons well,” when, in addition to what he just before taught them, he adds—“Besides this, it is distinguished under another character, to confirm the certainty of its operation, it being an everlasting covenant, founded in the counsel of peace which was between the glorious Persons

of the Godhead, before the foundation of the world. Now an *everlasting* covenant, founded on Divine wisdom, in the annals of *eternity*, CANNOT BE FRUSTRATED BY HUMAN FOLLY, in the transient period of *time*. What God hath made everlasting, MAN CANNOT BY ANY AFTER ACT DESTROY*.”—When this conviction shall be rendered familiar to the minds of the lower orders of society, the present state of the POLICE OF THE METROPOLIS will no doubt be proportionably improved. The different magistrates must be greatly assisted in their efforts to suppress offences by the propagation of such doctrines in this great town, abounding as it does with offenders against the laws, daily increasing in number. When it shall be once universally believed that no human folly can frustrate, nor any act of FRAUD OR FELONY preclude the pardon or destroy the operation of a covenant which existed, without conditions and terms on their part, from all eternity; the whole gang of coiners, pickpockets, receivers of stolen goods, housebreakers, and all the attendant train of criminals who set the laws

* “Prop against all Despair.” p. 18.

of their country at defiance, may go on to sin in security within the scope of a covenant which procured them pardon and peace *from all eternity*, and the blessings of which no *folly* OR AFTER ACT WHATEVER can possibly frustrate or destroy.—But, as the universal reception of this doctrine (to say the least of it) must considerably increase the risk to which the property and safety of the community is exposed, the community have a right to expect from its Evangelical teachers some security against this additional hazard. We have heard frequently of the alliance between CHURCH and STATE; but, if such are the doctrines to which the ignorant and profligate of this large capital are to be converted, we may venture to predict that this alliance must soon be dissolved, or the one will sooner or later destroy the other.

We shall see still more clearly, as we proceed, in what manner the Gospel is made to reconcile itself to that neglect of the moral duties of life which the vices of this crowded city so strongly exemplify.

One would suppose that the bulk of the people were so much under the restraint of

moral feeling, and acted so strictly under the influence of virtuous principle, that there was some danger to be apprehended lest this extreme purity of thought and action should come to be considered *meritorious*. An inhabitant of China or Japan, wholly unacquainted with the state of morals amongst us, would be led to conclude that we were a most righteous people, were he to take up any one of the numberless Evangelical tracts disseminated throughout the kingdom, and see with what earnestness they entreat every class of men amongst us to avoid placing the slightest dependence on their righteousness, or encouraging the idea that there is any MERIT in earnestly striving to fulfil their duty to God and man.

The grace and favour of God in a future life, as we are distinctly taught by the new Gospel Preacher, “*has no respect to meritorious services* on the one hand, nor is it influenced by mercenary views on the other. It is not bestowed as a *reward* for any *past performance*, nor does it look for a compensation *from future obedience*. God justifies the SINNER freely; and imputes to him righteousness without

works, which is therefore styled the gift of righteousness *.”—And lest the libertine, who is running on in his career of sensual gratification, should not think this intimation sufficiently plain and distinct, but should be led, in the hour of serious reflection, to consider wilful disobedience to the law of that great and glorious Being to whom he is indebted for every blessing as neither just nor *justifiable*, and lest these reflections should strike his conscience, and lead him back to the discharge of those duties, which, as a man and a Christian, it becomes him to perform—lest any penitent convictions of this kind should influence his future life, the Evangelic Rector, with superabundant industry, again exhorts and assures him, in language which he cannot misconstrue or mistake, that—“THE JUSTIFICATION OF A SINNER HAS NO CONNECTION WITH HIS OWN PERSONAL OBEDIENCE either to the MORAL or ceremonial *law*—in the act of his own justification, his *own per-*

* “*Sermons* chiefly designed to elucidate some of the leading doctrines of the GOSPEL.” By the Rev. EDWARD COOPER, Rector of Hamstale Redware, in the county of Stafford; Chaplain to the Right Hon. the Earl of Courtown, and late Fellow of All-Soul’s College, Oxford, p. 33.

*formances are not taken into the account**.”—Now, if an avowed ATHEIST or a declared INFIDEL were to affirm that the declaration and doctrines contained in the New Testament were altogether false and unfounded, our ears would be shocked, and our reason alarmed—but they may be overturned, and the reverse of them taught as the *true faith*, if the Preacher do but assume with a tone of authority the title of EVANGELICAL—notwithstanding the Apostles declare the Son of God to be “the Author of Salvation to ALL THAT OBEY HIM†.” He may teach, in direct opposition to it, to all who transgress his commandments, that their justification has NO CONNECTION WITH THEIR OWN PERSONAL OBEDIENCE. And notwithstanding that the Saviour himself, striving to counteract the tendency of such a doctrine, addresses them most plainly and most solemnly thus: “But *I* say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall *give an account* thereof in the day of judgment; for by thy words thou shalt be *justified*, and by this

* Sermons by the Rev. Edward Cooper, p. 35.

† Heb. 5. 9.

word thou shalt be condemned"—Yet shall the Gospel Preacher teach them, in direct contradiction to this solemn assurance, that the justification of a sinner *has no connection with his obedience* to the moral will of God, and that in the act of his justification his *performances are not taken into the account !!!* Is it not in the nature of things that the morals of the middling and lower orders of the people should decline in proportion to their confidence in the new Gospel Preaching? Is it not an event to be expected, that their moral principles should in the end fall a sacrifice to their perpetual and unceasing instruction in tenets of *practical infidelity*? The daily increasing crowds of the ignorant and uninquiring, which are gained over to the new school of faith, shew sufficiently how acceptable it is. What degree of injury may be accomplished, before the imposture is fully detected, it is not easy to determine; how much longer, and to what extent, the moral good sense of the people is to be imposed upon, must depend upon the serious attention that the probable consequences excite in the public mind. Some among the wisest

of our pious forefathers saw the evil in the beginning—its progress we of this generation have to witness—and if, it proceed much longer to spread as it has done, no very distant posterity will see the end.

It is enough, it seems, that all the disorderly classes of mankind, prompted as they are by their worst passions to trample on the public welfare, should know that they are, what every one else is convinced they are, the pests of society, and the evil is remedied. They are not to be exhorted to honesty, sobriety, or the observance of any laws, human or divine—they must not even be entreated to do their best.—“Just as absurd would it be,” we are told, “in a physician to send away his patient, when labouring under some desperate disease, with a recommendation to do his utmost towards his own cure, and then to come to him to finish it, as it is in the Minister of the Gospel to propose to the sinner to do his best, by way of healing the disease of the soul—and then to come to the Lord Jesus to perfect his recovery.” The only previous qualification is to know our misery, and the remedy is prepared *.”—

* See Dr. Hawker's Works, vol. 6, p. 117.

Out of pure humanity I would beg leave to caution every offender, of whatever description he be, against the sure consequences of *not doing his best* towards abstaining from the future commission of crimes, not only from the certainty of a judgment to come, but from the fear lest, if the eye of the law should chance to detect his offences, he may then, when it is too late, *know his misery*, and find that the *remedy prepared* is a HALTER.

The libertine, that has worn out the prime of his life in the haunts of prostitution, and who has destroyed his health, dissipated his property, and lost his character, cannot fail to *know his misery*—there is not a night he goes to rest but he will be put in full possession of this qualification, if that is the only thing required; but experience will teach him, what common sense will teach every one else, that the consciousness of disease is something very distinct from the application of the remedy.

It is greatly to be wished, since these Evangelical Preachers are so convinced of the *absurdity* of entreating the people *to do their best* towards amending their morals and acquiring virtuous habits, that they would at least not

strive to bring into neglect and contempt those Preachers, who, animated by a regard for the moral welfare of mankind, may entreat them to improve their opportunities of doing good, and to approve themselves, during the short and precarious period allotted them here below, to be faithful stewards of the talents entrusted to their care, and who may excite them so to do by the assurance that the Judge of all the earth will finally reward every well-meant endeavour to promote virtue in others, and to practise it ourselves.

Whatever these new Evangelists may teach to the contrary, the present state of public morals and of public happiness would assume a very different appearance if the thieves, swindlers, and highway robbers, would do *their best* towards maintaining themselves by honest labour, instead of perpetually planning new systems of fraud, and new schemes of depredation. However *absurd* they may conceive it to be to exhort those, who, by private extravagance are rendering themselves insolvent, to retrench their expenses, and do *their best* towards living within their incomes, the long list

of bankruptcies, which, to the disgrace of the national character, are to be seen in every Gazette, would be greatly curtailed, our prisons would abound less in fraudulent debtors, and industrious tradesmen would not be—as too many of them are—the prey of cheats, and the dupes of dishonesty.

I wish these triumphant High-Priests, who arrogate to themselves the exclusive praise of teaching the *Gospel*, would walk abroad into the world, and see the actual state and condition of criminals in common life—that they would look every Sessions into the list of sins recorded in the Old-Bailey Calendar; it would be well-judged in them to do this before they teach men that the Gospel has NEITHER TERMS NOR CONDITIONS—that the idea of MORAL GOODNESS, IS DONE AWAY—that their future condition has no connection with their PERSONAL OBEDIENCE TO THE MORAL LAW—that all offenders are justified without their performances being taken into the account—that it is *absurd* to teach them to *do their best* towards fulfilling those duties which they were created to fulfil, and the transgression of which it is that occasions all those crimes and misdemeanors which

pollute the community, and which leads so many to the gaol and to the gibbet.

“Let us revert back to that valuable work which has given the public so ample and exact a detail of the various crimes and misdemeanors by which public and private property and security are at present injured and endangered. Mr. Colquhoun, in the course of the remedies which he has so judiciously suggested towards their prevention, has the following remarks:—”

“To suffer the lower orders of people to be ill educated—to be totally inattentive to those wise regulations of state policy which might serve to guard and improve their MORALS—and then to punish them for crimes which have originated in bad habits—has the appearance of a cruelty not less severe than any which is exercised under the most despotic governments.

“There are two circumstances which ought also to be minutely considered in apportioning the measure of punishment—the *immorality of the action*; and its *evil tendency*.

“Nothing contributes in a greater degree to deprave the minds of the people than the little regard which laws pay to MORALITY; by inflicting more severe punishments on offenders

who commit what may be termed *political crimes*, and crimes against property, than on those who violate religion and virtue.—

—“*Private offences* being the source of *public crimes*, the best method of guarding society against the latter is, to make proper provisions for checking the former.—A MAN OF PURE MORALS always makes the best subject of every state; and few have suffered punishment, as public delinquents, who have not long remained unpunished as private offenders. The only means, therefore, of securing the peace of society, and of preventing more atrocious crimes, is to enforce, by lesser punishment, the observance of RELIGIOUS AND MORAL DUTIES: without this, laws are but weak guardians either of the state or the persons or property of the subject.

“The people are to the legislature what a child is to a parent:—As the first care of the latter is to teach the love of virtue, and a dread of punishment, so ought it to be the duty of the former to frame laws with the immediate view TO THE GENERAL IMPROVEMENT OF MORALS *.”

We shall now proceed to see with what zeal the patriotic efforts of the public Magistrate are opposed and counteracted by the *Evangelic* efforts of the public Preacher. After declaring, as we have before heard, that—"He shall not recommend men to exert themselves in acts of *moral virtue* toward their own salvation, he goes on to tell the public, and the legislature, that they are to expect nothing from him, or from the lower classes, so far as *he* can influence them, towards promoting a regard for any laws which may be made for the general improvement of MORALS.—"While I am careful (says he) to follow the doctrine and liturgy of the church, in holding up the Lord Jesus Christ as the *sole* Saviour of *sinners*, I SHALL NEVER DIRECT the congregation to seek salvation *partly* by their *own works*, and partly by his.—For this is a mongrel religion, unknown in Scripture, in direct opposition as well to the law as to the Gospel, and literally disowned by both * "

beeth

If any work of reformation is to be promoted,

* Vide Dr. Hawker's "Solemn Questions to Serious Christians."

not for the world will this pious Evangelist permit his congregation to put their shoulders to the wheel, not for the world would he act in *such direct opposition to the law* as to exhort bad men to comply with the rules of it. *Not*

Not for the revenues of an Archbishop would he exhort them to a duty *unknown in Scripture*, of adding their five talents to the five they have received,—never would he direct any follower of his so to act as to have it in his power to say, when, after a long time, the Lord cometh and reckoneth with him,—“Lord, *thou hast delivered unto me five talents, behold I have gained five talents more.*”—Far be it from him to commend any personal diligence, so strongly discommended, so *literally* disowned both by the law and Gospel. Nothing should induce him to preach such a *mongrel religion* as that which says, Well done, thou *good and faithful* servant, to him who doubled the treasure committed to him by his own diligence, and thus, *partly by his own works*, obtained the salvation announced to him in those approving words, “Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.”

Lest the growing immorality and increasing

disregard of practical virtue discernible in this crowded city should not spread itself with sufficient rapidity, and lest in our villages some MORAL Preacher should endeavour, by earnest admonition, and fervent exhortation, to check the progress of vice, and produce in his hearers a regard for all those Christian virtues which constitute good works, it was found expedient to prepare a remedy for this sore evil, and accordingly one amongst the most popular of these new Evangelists sends forth, for the instruction of the rising generation of servants and labouring poor in the different rural districts throughout the kingdom—his “Village Dialogues,” penned in that strain of vulgar quaintness, and low familiarity, which is so well fitted to the taste of those for whose edification they are intended.

The MORAL Preacher of the Established Church who strives to inform the manners of the public, and to check the prevailing spirit of vice and dissipation,—who labours to reclaim society from that extreme state of depravity to which it is fast arriving, and to keep alive, if possible, some veneration for the prac-

tice of *good* works, amidst the prodigious increase of *evil* works, the effects of which the laws are daily struggling, but struggling in vain, to remedy,—the Parochial Clergyman of this stamp is, in these Village Dialogues, held up to the sneer and ridicule of the country-people, under the contemptuous appellation of—the Rev. Mr. DOLITTLE. Accordingly, when he attempts to teach the farmer and his family, who are made the parties to the Dialogue, that faith *alone* is insufficient,—and that they must understand that *good works* are essential, the farmer is made to reply in a style of low mockery,

“Why then, Sir, when I say I shall go *alone* to Mapleton market next Thursday, you are to understand that I mean to take my wife and daughter Polly *with me*.—Is this the way in which I am to chop this *new-fashioned* logic *?”

A further string of questions is then so framed as to furnish the farmer and his family with a triumph over the *morality* of the Rev. Mr. Dolittle, and an opportunity of saying

* Village Dialogues, by Rowland Hill, A. M. vol. 1, p. 58.

every thing in praise of Mr. LOVEGOOD, the faithful Preacher. For this gentleman must have a *good name*, to give his doctrines the victory.

Throughout the whole of these Evangelical Dialogues, intended for the use of the country-people in every farm and hamlet, and dispersed among them with equal zeal and success, all that respect and reverence, which all ranks among them were wont to feel towards the Clergyman of their parish or their village, whose sermons aimed at their *moral reformation*, is gradually diminished and done away. Those Ministers of the living God, who had taught them to work out their own salvation, knowing they had the example and authority of Christ himself as their warrant so to do, are now pointed at with a sneer, and nicknamed into derision by the profligate and vulgar:—since, it seems, by the aid of the new Evangelists, and the assistance of these Dialogues, they soon discovered that “old Mr. DEADMAN, and his cousin, Mr. BLINDMAN, had preached no more the *true doctrine* of the Bible, as it

relates to salvation by Jesus Christ, than if they had been two of the priests of Jupiter *.”

Is it to be wondered at that the MORAL teachers of the *duties of Christianity* should be derided and despised by the lower orders throughout the different parts of the kingdom, when such language of derision and mockery is put into their mouths? The complaints of the profligacy of servants of every class, and of the depravity of the times, are in every body's hearing:—and these Evangelical Tutors—the dear Mr. Lovegoods of the day, deserve the best attention of the public for thus instructing the ignorant multitude—who are always ready enough to neglect their moral duties,—to despise and insult those by whom they are taught. It is well done in ROWLAND HILL to employ the buffoonery of an infidel, and the levity of a pantaloon, for the purpose of exposing to the sneer and ridicule of the common people those teachers which the nation has appointed to protect its youth, and rear them to virtue. It must afford him great consolation,

* See “Village Dialogues,” vol. 1, p. 102.

amidst the increasing immorality, which shocks the feelings of our judges at every returning Assizes throughout the kingdom, that HE has spared no pains to make the rising generation of ignorant and dissolute rustics laugh at what he terms the white-wash of *morality**; that when their Village Curate exhorts them, if they have *faith* in the doctrine of a world to come, to add to it those *good works* in which the sum and substance of religion consist, he has led them to ridicule him, as *chopping a new-fashioned logic*.

That class of Preachers who strive to impress men with a due sense of the importance of attending most so those precepts of the Gospel which are practical and essential, and which lead all who obey them to holiness and purity, to honesty and sobriety, to charity and justice, to devotion and piety, in a word, which lead to *good works*, are stigmatized to the multitude with every sly calumny and indirect reproach, in order to multiply the converts to *their* Gospel by thus alienating men from the moral Preachers of Christianity. These Village Dia-

* "Village Dialogues," vol. 1, p. 59.

logues have throughout this tendency ; it is obviously their end and aim.—The different parties to them are as so many decoy-birds, taught so to sing to the praise of *their* Preacher as may bring proselytes.—“ I admire ”—says one of them, by way of prefacing his departure from his former Minister of the moral Gospel,—“ I admire that *your* Minister takes such different texts to preach from to what Mr. *Dulman*, and such sort of Ministers, head their sermons with ; and then, when they have taken their text, we hear very little more of the *Bible*, but only about some MORAL duty we ought to perform, and against *some evil practice* that people ought to avoid *.”—Thus the secret intimation is thrown out to the ignorant, that the *duties* of man, with respect to God and his neighbour, make no part of the *Bible* ; and they are invited over to enlist themselves among the followers of the *Gospel Preacher*, where their faith will not be MISLED by instruction to the performance of any MORAL DUTY, OR CORRUPTED by exhortation to *avoid* any EVIL practice.

When we behold the High-Priest himself

* “ Village Dialogues.”

thus taking part in these Dialogues, in the assumed character of a new convert, in order through that means to win over others, it reminds one too much of the similar practice of a recruiting serjeant, who, when he is beating up for volunteers, walks before the drum in the disguise of a new recruit, to throw out a lure which may lead others to enlist.

It is in vain that the laws of the country strive to check the prevailing spirit of immorality. It is in vain that thinking men, contemplating its dreadful effects and its rapid increase, form themselves into a Society for its suppression. It is in vain that the breakers of that moral law, which says thou shalt not steal, are launched into eternity, to deter others by their fate. In vain will all these operate to restore the criminal and profligate to the path of moral duty. The Evangelical Priesthood pursue the extirpation of morality with a zeal and vehemence that must finally defeat all these efforts.

The moment they shall have succeeded in gaining possession of the popular mind, and have instilled into it the same rooted contempt

for moral duty which they every where avow; the triumph over morality will be complete; for they know that the best mode of attack is first to annihilate all respect for those that preach it, and to render them of no estimation in the eyes of the vulgar.—We shall see with what steadiness this Evangelical union of its enemies carry on their warfare against it.

The popular tracts of the Evangelical Dr. Hawker declare to the multitude, that—“if he were to drop into a Church of Christians, and discovered that *moral* discourses were supplying the place of Evangelical truths, he should be led to conclude that he had mistaken his path, and fallen into a synagogue of the Jews*.”—We have had a specimen of those *Evangelical* truths which are to annul the morality of the Ten Commandments.—The Doctor of the new Divinity, it seems, if he heard any one recommend, from the pulpit of a Christian Church, those principles of practical virtue which it was the express command of God that mankind should exemplify in their lives,—if he heard

* See his “Prop against all Despair,” p. 8.

him, entreating his congregation to a faithful obedience to that *moral* law, which God himself prescribed to mankind as their rule of conduct, —if any admonitions of this kind were given in an assembly of Christians, the Doctor would not believe his ears—The thing could not be possible in the Church of England—He must have blundered with some blind guide in a SYNAGOGUE!—there is no other way of accounting for it.

The numerous hearers and readers of this alarmist will not fail to act upon his representation, and keep out of the way of the Teachers of any thing so dangerous to the peace of mankind here, and their own peace hereafter, as the practice of *morality*.

Let us next remark what weapon another popular Preacher employs to resist the introduction, and destroy the influence, of practical virtue. The Preacher of the duties of Christianity—the better to degrade him in the opinion of the common people—is represented under the flimsy name of TAPLASH, (for those who have to deal with the multitude know well that a name goes a great way,) his character is

made to associate with it the idea of all that is offensive and absurd.—Then, as to his sermons, “the ingredients of all his compositions” (says this Evangelic accuser) “seemed to be nothing better than flimsy declamations and religious compliments—he would be talking of the *reward* we were to receive from the fair hand of our *virtuous conduct*.”—Thus the ignorant are taught, in pretty plain terms, and by a very plain inference, that our SAVIOUR’S SERMON on the Mount was mere flimsy declamation.—“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for *their’s* is the kingdom of God. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.” Thus said the Son of God,—and thus does he stand involved in the accusation—He too, we see—for his words are before us—He too would be talking of the *reward we were to receive* from the hand of our *virtuous conduct*. Thus is the Saviour himself held up to derision, who, as a MORAL PREACHER, had no equal, but who, if the new Evangelical host can help it, shall have no imitators.

Well might our Saviour say, as he did, to

this class of Teachers, who, under the disguise of great outward sanctity, were secretly destroying the influence, and undervaluing the importance, of his *moral* example.—“ Woe unto you, for ye are as graves which appear not, and the men that walk over them are NOT AWARE OF THEM *.”

Let us now attend them a little further.

The faithful Clergyman, striving by his exhortation to reclaim mankind from vice, and contrasting the happy consequence of a virtuous life with the distressful progress and fatal termination of a life of guilt, is further exposed to the sneer of the vulgar by the ridicule cast upon this discharge of his duty.—Mark the air and language of disdain with which moral virtue is consigned over to contempt in the person of its Teacher. “ At one time,”—says the Reverend Evangelist, addressing himself to the vulgar, and to that which always governs the vulgar, their prejudices,—“ At one time, after a very tasty specimen of his elocution, in which he *had been displaying* the

* Luke xi. 44.

rich repast of *conscious virtue* brought home to the *pious mind*, he thus concluded, with the following line out of Thomson :—

‘ Come then, expressive Silence, muse her praise.’

“ The orator stood all astonished at his own harangue, gave a very elegant *congee* to his auditory, and then most gracefully sat down.”—

“ In one of his *moral* harangues, descanting upon the *beauty of virtue* and *the excellence of a virtuous life*, he thus addressed his auditory, in a sentiment he had gathered from a *Heathen* orator *.”—

Then follows an invocation to *virtue*, which the *Heathen* orator is made to venerate, and which the *Evangelical* orator strives to burlesque.—Tom Paine himself never laboured harder to root all virtue out of society,—Mandeville nor Voltaire never even laboured so much ;—they were content with declaring their disbelief of a future state; they did not disperse Dialogues among the poor and profligate to expose to ridicule those who should exhort them to make provision for it.

* “ Village Dialogues,” vol. iii. p. 43.

I confess it does not appear to me that any Jacobin from France could better contrive to make us the instrument of our own ruin than by following up this system of private and public teaching; let the intelligent reader judge whether the following language used by those writers, who early warned us against the consequence of French atheistical principles, does not apply equally to the consequences of English Evangelical principles. Let him determine whether what is here addressed to us, on the progress of Gallic infidelity, does not equally refer to the opposition of this new sect of Evangelists to the cause of *virtue* and *morality*.—

“ While books instilling *sound principles* are frequently issued to the world with all the embellishments which result from the combined skill of the paper-maker, printer, hot-presser, and engraver, which of necessity confine their purchase to those who are least in want of their instructions, the poison which destroys them is almost invariably circulated in a cheap form, which renders it easily attainable *by that description of persons on whom it is most likely to*

make the deepest impression, and whose mental infection is most prejudicial to the happiness and tranquillity of the state. This surely is an evil of magnitude, and calls loudly for the application of a speedy and effectual remedy.—In the present state of Europe, it is as much the duty of those who are entrusted with the government of states to attend to the *press* as to the army or to the revenue. The call upon them is imperious; to evade it would be treachery, to resist it criminal. In other times, when the acquisition of power between rival parties is the contention, government may, without danger, silently contemplate the squabble, and remain passive and inert. But when the object of competition is the social and civilized world, *with all its venerable train of religious DUTIES and MORAL feelings*, no individual can be neutral and virtuous, no government can be inactive and innocent *.”—

Does not this new Evangelical sect pursue the same end, and by the same means?—It is an impudent evasion to say, or their ad-

* See the Prefatory Advertisement to the Anti-Jacobin, p. 6.

vocates for them, that they wish well to the cause of *virtue* and *morality*, while they are preaching it down in every bye-street in London, and deprecating it in tracts and sermons circulated through the kingdom.

The leaders of this sect, like the atheistic leaders of France, begin by securing the mon-
mon people, because they know that, come what may, when that point is once gained, their cause must be victorious. When the populace shall be once brought to a conviction that the Gospel, as they are told, has neither terms nor conditions,—no ifs and buts ;—that the idea of moral goodness, as essential to salvation, is done away ;—*that no qualification, even of merit, is necessary for the attainment of future happiness in another life ;—that that attainment is not suspended on the performance of any duties whatever,—that it is procured for them by an eternal covenant, which no folly on their part can frustrate, nor any after-act destroy ;—that no sins can be too great, no life too impure, no offences too many or too aggravated, to disqualify the perpetrators of them for salvation ;—that the justification of*

those who have outraged every moral duty has no connection with their *future obedience*;—when this *Evangelical system of faith* shall have gained a thorough possession of the popular mind, it requires no very extensive foresight to predict what will be the result.

Let us next advert to the nature of that *morality* which we have just seen treated with mockery, and the discourses of the moral Preacher, whom the weak and the worthless are taught by every artful insinuation to shun, as a *Heathen orator*.

We shall be the better able to judge of that style of Preaching, which the Gospel, and the necessity of the times, require to be exposed to the jeer of the rabble, and the scoff of the profligate.

“In every age (says the MORAL Divine *) the practice has prevailed of substituting certain appearances of piety in the place of the great *duties* of humanity and mercy. Too many there have always been who flatter themselves with the hope of obtaining the friendship of their Creator, though they neglect to *do justice*

* Blair.

to their fellow-creatures. But such persons may be assured that *their supposed piety* is altogether of a spurious kind ; it is an *invention of their own, unknown to reason, unknown in the word of God*. In Scripture, we are ever directed to try our faith *by our works* ; our love of God, by our love of men.—We are directed to consider piety as a principle which regenerates the heart, and forms it to goodness.—We are taught, that *in vain* we address any homage to *Christ, unless we do the things which he saith* : and that *love, peace, gentleness, goodness, meekness, and temperance*, are not only the *injunctions of his law*, but the native fruits of his Spirit. If, therefore, while PIETY seems ardent, MORALITY shall decline, you have full reason to believe, that into that piety some corrupting ingredients have entered ; and if ever your regard to MORALITY shall totally fail ; if, while you make *many prayers*, you give no alms ; if, while *you appear to be zealous for God*, you are false or unjust to men ; if you are hard or contracted in heart, severe in your censures, and oppressive in your conduct, *then conclude with certainty, that what you had termed*

PIETY is no more than an *empty name*.—What you have called by that name resolves itself into one or other of three things :—either it is a hypocritical *form* of godliness, *assumed in order to impose upon the world*; or, which is the most favourable supposition, it is a transient impression of seriousness, an accidental melting of the heart, which passes away like a morning cloud; or, which I am afraid is *too often the case*, it is the *deliberate refuge of a deluded and superstitious*, but, at the same time, a *corrupted mind*.”—Such is the recommendation of morality which this new sect of Evangelists abhor; which they reprobate as the reverse of their Gospel system. I have selected this specimen from BLAIR, because his Sermons are not merely involved in the indiscriminate ridicule thrown upon all *moral harangues*, which are represented with a sneer, as descanting upon the beauties of *virtue* and the *excellencies of a virtuous life*, but they are marked by the new Evangelists with a peculiar slur of contempt.—“Oh! my dear, (says one of the unconverted, in the Village Dialogues, in order to induce his wife to keep out of the crowd which

attended the Evangelical Preacher)—Oh ! my dear, I'll stay at home with you, and read some of the Saturday's papers of the Spectator ; you know they are all upon *moral* subjects ; or one of *Dr. Blair's Sermons*, if Mr. Worthy has got them ! !”

To this Mrs. Lovely (for she must have an Evangelical name) is made to reply,—“ Indeed, my dear, I never could read, either in those papers or in BLAIR'S Sermons, *any thing like so interesting* as what I have heard this day from Mr. Lovegood *.”—We cannot fail to remark here the insidious manner in which these admirable Sermons are classed, as it were negligently, with *those papers*, in order to impress every reader with a prejudice against them, as trifling and flimsy, and beneath the notice of the serious believer.

Having selected a specimen of Moral Preaching from one of its most distinguished advocates on the one side, it is but fair to select a specimen of Evangelical Preaching from one of its most celebrated and popular champions on the other.

* Vide vol. 3, p. 94.

Let us take it then from the favourite and admired Sermons of Mr. TOPLADY.

We will preface it with the solemn and awful communication of the Evangelist John, in order to shew how exactly they accord, how clearly the doctrines of the one are deduced from the Revelation of the other, and how justly, therefore, it assumes the exclusive title of EVANGELICAL.

“And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written on the books, *according to their* WORKS.

“And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and Hell gave up the dead which were in them: and *they* were judged *every man according to his* WORKS *.”

Let us recall to mind, at the same time, the urgent caution conveyed to us in the epistolary writings of PAUL, given as an awful warning to the whole human race—“Be not deceived, God is not mocked, for whatsoever a man *soweth, that shall he also reap.*”

* Revelation, c. 20, v. 12, 13.

And let us further add to the authority of Revelation and of Apostolic testimony the confirmation and assurance of the Saviour himself.—“ When the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy Angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory ;

“ And before him shall be gathered all nations, and he shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats :

“ And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.

“ Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world :

“ For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat ; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink : I was a stranger, and ye took me in ; naked, and ye clothed me : I was sick, and ye visited me : I was in prison, and ye came to me.

“ Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we *thee* an hungered, and fed thee ; or thirsty, and gave thee drink ?

“ When saw we *thee* a stranger, and took thee in ; or naked, and clothed thee ?

“ Or when saw we *thee* sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?

“ And the King shall answer, and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have *done it* unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have *done it unto me*.

“ Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.

“ For I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me not in; naked, and ye clothed me not; sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not.

“ Then shall *they also* answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we *thee* an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and *did not* minister unto thee.

“ Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye *did it not* to one of the least of *these*, ye *did it not* to me.

“ And *these* shall go away into everlasting punishment, *but the righteous* into life eternal*.”

Carrying all this in our mind, let us now attend to the *Evangelical* Preacher.

* Mat. 6. 25.

“The RELIGION of JESUS CHRIST stands eminently distinguished, and essentially differenced, from every other religion that was ever proposed to human reception, by *this remarkable peculiarity*, that, look abroad in the world, and you will find that every religion, *except* ONE, puts you upon DOING SOMETHING, in order to recommend yourself to God. A MAHOMETAN expects to be saved by works; a PAPIST looks to be justified by his works; a free-willer hopes for salvation by his *works, compliances, endeavours, and perseverance*; a PAGAN, if he believes that there is a future state, expects to be happy hereafter by virtue of the supposed *good he does*, and of the evil he leaves undone; a MYSTIC has the same hope, and stands upon the same foundation. It is only the religion of Jesus Christ that *runs counter* to all the rest, by affirming that we are *saved* and called with an holy calling, *not* according to our works, but according to the Father’s own purpose and grace, which was *not* sold to us *on certain conditions to be fulfilled by ourselves*, but was given us in Christ before the world began *.”

* Toplady’s Works ; see his Sermon on James ii. 18.

Now I would pause here, and ask this plain question, is this the doctrine of the true Gospel? or is it the doctrine of an avowed infidel?—If it is the doctrine of the *true Gospel*, then the *New Testament* cannot be the *true Gospel*, since what is just before quoted from it teaches a doctrine so glaringly contradictory that no language on earth can reconcile the one with the other.—If, on the other hand, the New Testament contains the true Gospel, then is this the doctrine of one who cannot believe that Gospel to be true, because he is most distinctly and directly at variance with it. He is therefore, let him come in what disguise he may—he is an INFIDEL.

Is there any man living so blind that he cannot, or so bigotted that he will not, see the tendency of all this, to pave the way for the most unqualified ATHEISM?

What do these Evangelical Preachers teach?—If such are to be our public instructors, and are to draw aside the people of England from all *moral* admonition, and to vilify it as fit only for a Heathen orator, and worthy only of a Jewish synagogue, let us dissect their doctrine, that we may at least know what it

is we are to learn, and what it is in which our faith is to consist.

Consulting one of their most distinguished leaders, whose works and doctrines are studied, quoted, copied, consulted, and incorporated into the sermons of all the sect, what are we taught?—

In the first place, we learn that—“the religion of Christianity stands distinguished from all others by this remarkable peculiarity, that it is the only one that *does not put you upon doing something*, in order to recommend yourself to God.”—Now the religion of Christianity, as delivered by the Saviour himself to mankind, *has not* this remarkable peculiarity, but the reverse; for it teaches, and in his own words, thus:—“All things whatsoever ye would that men should *do* to you, *do ye* even so to them, for this is the law and the prophets.”—And when one came and said unto him,—“Good Master, *what shall I do* that I may attain eternal life?” he told him distinctly what he must do, and by what means he must attain it; he answered,—“If thou wilt enter life, keep the Command-

ments * ”—The Gospel, then, which we have ever believed to contain the religion of the Christian world, has not that *remarkable peculiarity* by which alone the Evangelical Preacher tells us *it is to be known*. According to his text, therefore, it must be rejected !!

“ The religion of Jesus Christ (says the Evangelical Teacher of the people) runs counter to all others, by affirming that we are not saved on certain conditions to be fulfilled by ourselves.”—Now in that religion which the New Testament represents to us as his, and which the Christian world have hitherto embraced as such, are these words : —“ Not every one that sayeth unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of Heaven, but he that *doeth the will* of my Father which is in Heaven † ”

Now since we *are* here put upon fulfilling our duty in order to recommend ourselves to God, and since this Gospel contains certain *conditions to be fulfilled by ourselves*, it follows, that it

* Mat. 19, ver. 16, 17.

† Mat. 7, ver. 25.

cannot contain the religion of Jesus Christ, whose *remarkable peculiarity* it is, that it does not command the one, or prescribe the other. Trying it, therefore, by the Evangelical test, it must be rejected !!!

In the Gospel of the New Testament, it is recorded that “Jesus himself said to his disciples, ‘The Son of Man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels, and then he shall reward every man *according to his works* *.’” —But it is the MAHOMETAN that expects to be saved by his WORKS.—It follows, therefore, according to the Evangelical Preacher, that the New Testament teaches the delusive faith of MAHOMET, and not the genuine religion of CHRIST.

In the Gospel, as transmitted to us by the four Evangelists, we are throughout expressly taught that “he that shall endure to the end, the same shall be saved †” —But it is the free-willer, we are told, that *hopes for salvation* by his *compliances, endeavours, and perseverance*.

* Mat. 16, ver. 27.

† Mat. 14, ver. 13.

—According, therefore, to the *Evangelical Preacher*, the four Evangelists do not teach the *religion of Jesus Christ*.—A free-willer, it seems, may adopt their doctrine, but it will not be held by a *true believer*.

The sacred volume of Holy Writ declares that—“*true religion*, and undefiled before God and the Father, IS THIS, to visit the fatherless and widow in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.” But to believe this is to be a PAGAN,—“a *Pagan*, if he believes that there is a future state, expects to be happy hereafter, *by virtue* of the supposed good *he does*, and *of the evil he leaves undone*.”

Such is the clear inference from the Evangelical doctrines! The result is not circuitous, but direct,—it is the conclusion to which every mind must be led that is capable of thinking, and is qualified to examine or reflect at all. Can we wonder, then, if infidelity increase under such instructors?—While we are spending our strength and draining our resources to resist that mighty combination framed against

the religion of Christianity FROM ABROAD, it may not be wholly useless to open our eyes to what is going forward AT HOME.

We must not judge of men by their professions, but by their actual efforts.—We must not judge of them by any sounding name they may appropriate to themselves; for that is assumed for the purpose of obtaining a favourable first impresson, and throwing the judgment of mankind off its guard. Whoever weakens, in society, the veneration for morality, is a traitor to his country; and whoever diminishes the influence of religion in the world, as a rule of daily conduct, is a traitor to his God.—And it is not the disguise of an Evangelist that should screen him from shame, or shelter him from indignation;—it is a cloak that has been worn threadbare in the service of bigotry and imposture.—It is high time that some efforts should be made to rescue ourselves from the abuses that are practised under it *.

* There is perhaps no public writer, to whose labours, in the cause of moral virtue, the public are more indebted than to Mr. Paley. There is no one whose writings are

When we remark the odium cast on the moral Ministers of the Established Church by this new spiritual power, and the consequent diffusion of the same hostile spirit among the prodigious body of their followers, we cannot fail to call to mind, that among the pre-disposing causes of the French Revolution was the state of public opinion respecting the national clergy—that the unpopularity artfully brought on them by persons who sought their degradation was the prelude to their downfall.—The multitude, whose prejudices had been secretly

better calculated to do good, by inculcating the essential duties of common life, and the sound truths of practical Christianity. But in order to suppress their circulation, on account of the stress they lay upon the fulfilment of the duties of Christian morality, an Evangelical libeller ranks him in the list of infidels, that his readers may be deterred from the perusal of his works.—“ Though no man (we are told) has written better respecting the authenticity of Revelation, *yet few have gone so far in giving up many of the divine truths therein contained* †.”—And what proof is brought to substantiate so serious a charge? None! I know not what sort of character such libellers contrive to obtain in the world, but sure I am that they deserve the hiss of every honest and manly mind,

† Village Dialogues, by Rowland Hill, vol. 2, p. 117, **FOURTH EDITION.**

excited against them, made no scruple to tear them from that station of which they had long been taught to look upon them as unworthy. The passions of contempt, hatred, and revenge, were let loose, and the mob became the willing and eager instruments of the removal of an order of persons whom they had long before been made to despise.

Their depravity, and their unfitness for their high and sacred function, were the pretexts. The event in which all this defamation ended is under our eye. The national clergy fell under the load of obloquy cast upon them—and with them fell that *moral* order of society which it had so long been the aim of their opponents to overturn. That this was the active and efficient cause may be collected from the reasons urged by Mr. BURKE in their defence. —“Undoubtedly”—says this strenuous supporter of moral freedom and moral government, —“Undoubtedly the natural progress of the passions from frailty to vice ought to be prevented with a watchful eye and a firm hand. But is it true that the body of your Clergy had passed those limits of a just allowance? From the general style of your publications of all

sorts, one would be led to believe that your Clergy in France were a sort of monsters—an horrible composition of superstition, ignorance, sloth, fraud, avarice, and tyranny.

“ When my occasions took me into France, towards the close of the late reign, the Clergy, under all their forms, engaged a considerable part of my curiosity. So far from finding (except from one set of men, not then very numerous, though very active) the complaint and discontents against that body which some publications had given me reason to expect, I perceived little or no public or private uneasiness on their account. On further examination, I found the Clergy, in general, persons of moderate minds and decorous manners;—I had not the good fortune to know a great many of the parochial Clergy, but in general I received a perfectly good account of their morals, and of their attention to their duties.—With some of the higher Clergy I had a personal acquaintance, and of the rest in that class very good means of information.—They seemed to me beyond the clerical character, liberal and open, with the hearts of gentlemen and men of honour; neither insolent nor servile in their

manners and conduct. They seemed to me rather a superior class, a set of men amongst whom you would not be surprised to find a *Fenelon*.—I saw among the Clergy of Paris (many of the description are not to be met with any where) men of great learning and candour ; and I had reason to believe that this description was not confined to Paris. What I found in other places I know was accidental, and therefore to be presumed a fair sample. I spent a few days in a provincial town, where, in the absence of the Bishop, I passed my evenings with three Clergymen, his Vicars'-General, persons who would have done honour to any Church. They were all well informed : two of them of deep, general, and extensive erudition, ancient and modern, oriental and western ; particularly in their own profession. They had a more extensive knowledge of our English Divines than I expected, and they entered into the genius of those writers with a critical accuracy. One of these gentlemen is since dead, the Abbe Moranges.—I pay this tribute, without reluctance, to the memory of that noble, reverend, learned, and excellent person ; and I

should do the same with equal cheerfulness to the merits of the others, who, I believe, are still living, if I did not fear to hurt those whom I am unable to serve.

“ Some of these Ecclesiastics of rank are, by all titles, persons deserving of general respect—they are deserving of gratitude from me, and from many English. If this letter should ever come into their hands, I hope they will believe that there are those of our nation who feel for their unmerited fall, and for the cruel confiscation of their fortunes, with no common sensibility. What I say of them is a testimony, as far as one feeble voice can go, which I owe to truth. Whenever the question of unnatural persecution is concerned I will pay it. No one shall prevent me from being just and grateful. THE TIME IS FITTED FOR THE DUTY; and it is particularly becoming to shew our justice and gratitude when those who have deserved well of us and of mankind are labouring under popular obloquy * ”—

The same popular obloquy, which thus secretly paved the way for the destruction of the

* Burke's Letters on the French Revolution, p. 314.

national Clergy of France, is, with us, daily forwarding the same aims, and proceeding to the same ends. It is working at present under ground ; but it is not working unseen by those whose eyes are open, nor unfelt by those against whom its preparations are directed. The Evangelical dissenting Ministry, who thus hold up the *moral* Clergy of the Church as grossly abusing their trust, by perverting that *Gospel* which they were chosen to preach, when they are not only exposed to the multitude as indifferent to their own eternal concerns, but as drawing *them* aside from the truth ;—when this body of opponents, announcing themselves to be the faithful Teachers of that Gospel which the Church is represented as ignorantly and impiously setting at nought—when this body has by degrees gained such an accession of strength and influence, from the prodigious increase of its followers, as to have become a NEW SPIRITUAL POWER in the State,—and when this power is daily increasing its ascendancy over, and multiplying its adherents from, that class of persons which must ever make up the mass of every nation, and in which mass the

physical power of the nation itself must ever reside—when this new power, manifesting a zeal commensurate with its purpose, inspires the same zeal into its proselytes, and those proselytes are taken from among those whose passions are always strong because their reason is weak, and in whom therefore the workings of fanaticism are always the most extravagant and the most to be feared ;—in this state of things, is not the Christian religion here, as in France, in danger of abolition amongst us, from the powerful but disguised hostility thus speciously employed against it?—Abolish the *moral law*, which this new power thus slight and abuse, and what have we left? Take away the *moral* Commandments of God from his Gospel, and you have lain the axe to the root ;—its essence, its vitality, is gone.—Take away the restraint of its *moral* precepts from religion, and you abolish it to all intents as effectually as it ever was abolished in France in the most frantic period of the Revolution, and you let loose upon society all the vices and all the crimes which that country exhibited when those *moral* restraints were disregarded and despised.—Can any man

then, that wishes well to his country, look with unconcern on the establishment of this NEW POWER? Can any man that venerates religion, and feels its value in society, carelessly see its practical influence systematically opposed, and the Ministers of Christian MORALITY given over to mockery and scorn by that rival authority, thus risen up to supplant them?

These men, lifted up in their ignorance, and muddled with the fumes of their own VANITY, proclaim their interpretations of the sacred text to be such alone as should be adopted; as if the Bible had no meaning till they came to explain it,—as if no one had sense to examine or decide for himself, but must resort to *thèm* as ‘stewards of the mysteries.’—Common sense is to be cast aside, and reason trampled under foot, to make way for *their* dictates, and to give place to *their* decision.—But is it not surprising that their emptiness is not discovered?—Not at all—their followers are not competent to discover it. Look at the crowds which flock round impostors of every kind. Can the ignorant detect the ignorant? No. But men of skill will decompose the poisonous mixture, which the

deluded victim of quackery swallows as an infallible cure.

Eventually the whole direction of the popular mind, in the affairs of religion, will be gained into the hands of a set of ignorant fanatics, of such low origin and vulgar habits as can only serve to degrade religion in the eyes of those to whom its influence is most wanted.—Will such persons venerate or respect it in the hands of a sect composed in the far greater part of bigotted, coarse, illiterate, and low-bred enthusiasts? Men who have abandoned their lawful callings, in which, by industry, they might have been useful members of society, to take upon themselves concerns the most sacred, with which nothing but their vanity and their ignorance could have excited them to meddle.

The doctrine of these directors of the new Divinity is calculated to repress, as much as possible, all personal virtue.—Every page of the Gospel is perverted from its true meaning, in order to make it subservient to this purpose ;—they throw the imputation of pride upon what they term the *self-righteousness* of all those who strive to attain salvation by per-

sonal goodness. They never fail to refer to the proud Pharisee, whom they term *self-righteous*, and then, having grossly misrepresented his character, they proceed to declaim on the arrogance of founding any expectation of reward from the performance of our *moral duties*;—whereas the plain truth is, that the Pharisee was *not righteous*, but merely arrogated to himself that character; he had neglected all the *moral duties* of life, and the weightier matters of the law, and fancied that because he abstained from those most flagrant crimes which he had no temptation to commit,—had fasted twice in the week, and paid tithes of all that he possessed, (where others only paid tithes of the smaller herbs of mint and rue,) that he had a strong and superior claim to reward.—The moral truth which our Saviour meant to convey by this parable is obviously this,—that the sinner who is humbled with a sense of his past offences is more likely to repent and obtain salvation than the ostentatious bigot, who, while he neglects the essential *duties* of Christianity, believes, because he makes long prayers, hears sermons twice in a week, and is

strict in the outward ceremonials of devotion, that therefore he stands in no need of repentance, but is already among the number of the elect.

To what class of persons does the Gospel tell us this parable was spoken? to the truly righteous who trusted in their own good works for acceptance? No such thing,—take the words of the Gospel itself—“And he spake this parable unto certain which *trusted* in themselves *that they were* righteous, and *despised others.*”—But if a fool prides himself in his *ignorance*, would any one speak of him as being proud of his *understanding*? Is true wisdom to be abused and undervalued, because the vanity of a blockhead leads him to *trust in himself* that he is *wise*? Is a lecture to the one to be turned into a libel on the other?

Yet such is the barefaced distortion of truth practised, for the mere purpose of bringing *morality* into contempt. The utility of this instructive parable is wholly destroyed by their most shameful perversion of it to the purpose of depreciating the value of that *practical* goodness which it was meant to exalt, and of the

efficacy of that personal virtue which it was its sole design to enforce. To this end, that which is nothing more than *self-delusion*, in the Pharisee, is termed *self-righteousness*; and from thence occasion is taken to defame all those who strive to prepare themselves, during this their state of trial, for that judgment which they must undergo at that day, when they will receive either reward or punishment, according as they shall be found to have *merited* the one, or *deserved* the other!

They rob the upright of their confidence in Heaven, by teaching them that no good works or virtuous actions can attain it. All the promises which God of his infinite goodness has given to man, to excite him to perseverance in well doing, are *in fact* denied, and *in effect* frustrated, by a swarm of new Evangelists, who are every where teaching the people that no reliance is to be placed on holiness of life as a ground of future acceptance!!—Who are these men, I would ask, that thus strive to root out of the belief of the merciful that they shall obtain mercy, and of the *pure in heart* that they shall see God?!! Who are these men that

thus dare annul the promises of Heaven to the righteous, by declaring *that* righteousness to be no ground of dependence?—Where is their warrant for this their ignorant presumption? Is it by their insulting pretensions to the title of Evangelical Teachers that the voice of reason and the word of God are to be silenced?

When the man to whom *five* talents were given produced *ten* when he was called to account, did the Lord revile his *self-dependence*, or reward his hopes?—When the steward of *one* talent produced what he had received, did he praise his *faith* or punish his *folly*?—Let the new Gospel Interpreters answer this plainly, and without equivocation.—Let them first understand that Gospel they affect exclusively to teach, and not fancy themselves doing the work of Evangelists while they are splitting the texts of truth to patch up the doctrines of error.

There is no virtue which these Preachers do not reprobate in the exercise, in order to sink its worth and value in the estimation of mankind!—There is no example which the Bible holds forth for our instruction or imi-

tation, but they strive to annul its efficacy by denying its *merit*; nay, the very conduct which they allow to be *virtuous*, they, in the very same breath, denounce as *criminal*.—Take one among ten thousand examples that might be offered.—“There was a man in the land of Uz (says the Scripture), whose name was Job, and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil.”—What comment does the Evangelical Preacher make upon this? what construction does he put upon it so as to discourage others from the imitation of such a character? “There is no doubt (says he) of the integrity and uprightness of Job, but, while he was righteous, he was self-righteous, and this was his crime *.”—What blasphemous jargon is this, which admits the *integrity* and the *uprightness* of the character alluded to, and at the same time denounces this personal righteousness as CRIMINAL!—I can use no language which would sufficiently stigmatise so gross and glaring an attempt to root out

* “Village Dialogues,” by Rowland Hill, vol. 8, p. 104, Fourth Edition.

of the popular mind all respect for the practice of *virtue*, by attaching to it the imputation of *guilt*.

That *self-murder* is a sin, we know; but it was left for the new theory of religion to teach the guilt of *self-righteousness*.

Where do we find it affirmed that the *righteousness* of Job was *criminal*? What authority is quoted to support a language so stupidly contradictory?—What a contemptible opinion must such writers entertain of the British public before they can venture to dictate to it in such a strain of unmeaning gibberish! No man, that did not count upon finding in every reader a greater fool than himself, could risk the publication of such impious trash.

Are the faithful followers of that Saviour who suffered, leaving us an *example* that we might follow his steps, to be libelled as proud and self-righteous, instead of being animated to perseverance by the encouraging assurance which he has himself given, that—“ he that endureth to the end shall be saved.”—Is the upright man, who rests on the promise of

God to reward every one according to his *works*, to be taught that he is resting on a broken reed?—This he most certainly is, if the Evangelical doctrine be true, that these *works* are not to be relied on as a ground of future acceptance.

What, after all, is the meaning of this term *self-righteous*, which is canted about from mouth to mouth, and from sermon to sermon, with such a tone of bitter condemnation? Do those who adopt it one after another pause to inquire what they mean by it?—Does not righteousness consist in the practice of those duties which the Gospel enjoins, and abstaining from those crimes which the Gospel condemns? If so, must not each individual *himself* practise that which is right, and refrain from that which is wrong?—Can *another* tell truth *for* a liar, or be honest *for* a house-breaker?—Can the licentious be pure *by substitute*, or the profane be devout *by deputy*?—Can another be upright *for* the swindler, or chaste *for* the seducer?—Must not every bad man leave off *his own* evil courses, and must he not *himself* repent and reform?—Is it not ex-

pressly declared that it is “ *he that doeth righteousness that is righteous?* ”

Since then it is plain that each must *himself* be righteous, if he be so at all, what do they mean who thus inveigh against *self-righteousness*, since Christ himself declares there is no other?

Are we, in the Day of Judgment, to be tried each according to what he hath *himself* done, whether it be good or evil; or are we to be tried according to what *another* hath done? —When Christ shall come to judge the earth, will he call us to answer for *our own* deeds, or will he not?—If he will, how heavily must they answer at the bar of God, who, by depreciating the merit of personal goodness, discourage the truly virtuous, and daily draw aside many from that path which can alone lead them to Heaven!

“ CRIMES *of every description* (says Mr. Colquhoun) have their *origin* in the vicious and immoral habits of the people; in the little attention paid to the *education* of the *inferior orders*; and in the want of some plan for regulating the MORALS of this useful class of

the community *.”—How then must crimes of every description increase, if, instead of a plan for the regulation of their morals, we have a system fitted for their further destruction ; and if, instead of being early educated to those habits of practical integrity, devotion, and purity of heart and life, which in Scripture language is termed “righteousness,” they are to be educated into a thorough contempt of those habits, as of no *merit* or estimation, and brought up in the belief that this righteousness is a thing so vile, as only fit to be compared to whatever is most worthless ?

Lest the *Village Dialogues* before noticed should not bring the Heathen attribute of *virtue* sufficiently into discountenance, another Evangelical Minister forwards the labour by the aid of *Village Sermons*.—It is needful that the different districts of this kingdom should be well supplied, lest a respect for the laws of morality should gain ground, and the cottager should bring his children up in the notion that it was *meritorious* to observe them.

Notwithstanding the earnest efforts of the Gospel to guard the youthful mind against

* Treatise on the Police of the Metropolis, p. 32.

the deception too often practised upon it by impostors in the disguise of Saints ; yet are those efforts defeated by the daring audacity with which they are opposed.—

“ And to her,” says the SCRIPTURE, “ was yet granted, that she should be arrayed in FINE LINEN, CLEAN and WHITE, for the FINE LINEN is the RIGHTEOUSNESS of Saints *.”—What say the VILLAGE SERMONS ?—“ My dear children, why do you hope to go to Heaven ? Is it because you are not as bad as others ; because you say your prayers, and go to church or meeting ? If so, you are proud ; proud of your own RIGHTEOUSNESS, which the SCRIPTURE calls FILTHY RAGS †.”

There’s an EVANGELICAL Priest for you !!!

This Evangelical Instructor of VILLAGES answers all questions with great readiness.—“ Are you not asking—(says he)—wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and appear before the Most High God ? You have now heard. *Not by works of righteousness which you have done,*—these are imperfect and insufficient

* Rev.

† “ Village Sermons,” intended for the use of families, Sunday schools, and companies assembled for religious

—The best of them is mixed with sin.—*Trust not in them* *.”—This is indeed spoken in a tone of authority. But “BE NOT DECEIVED,” says our *Saviour* ; “ *he, that doeth righteousness, IS RIGHTEOUS.*”—

I am only anxious that the country should have some well-authenticated examples of what those doctrines are which are imposed upon the weak and ignorant, and dignified with that pompous title which we find annexed to them. I am only desirous that these doctrines should stand out fairly to the light—should be turned round, and inspected.—If the new faith be the only true one, let us embrace it ; but let not those who vend these *new articles* expect that we should choose them with our eyes shut.

Those who know the actual state of the morals of the lower classes, in the different hamlets and villages, can alone judge of the pernicious and destructive effects which arise to society from the propagation of principles so adverse to their reformation. Every country

instruction in country villages ; in four volumes, by GEORGE BURDER. See Sermon XIII. vol. 2, SEVENTH Edition.

* Ibid.

magistrate throughout the kingdom has daily occasion to lament the increase of depredations committed, not only on the farmer, but on property of every description in their respective neighbourhoods. It is equally the duty and interest of every man to give effect, to the utmost of his means, to the exertions of the magistrates to suppress them. But let any person ask himself, whether he thinks the amendment of these offenders,—if in an hour of remorse their conscience should send them to seek instruction,—is to be effected by such an address as the following:—

“ You must *despair* of obtaining salvation by your works,—your SORROW FOR SIN, or your FUTURE AMENDMENT—And this *will make the Gospel welcome to you* * ”—Can any man that is not crazy sit down deliberately and pen such discourses for the press?—Can any man calling himself a Minister, and professing to teach the doctrines of that great Founder of our religion, who died, that, by his teaching and his example, he might save his people *from their*

* Burder's Village Sermons, Seventh Edition. Sermon III. p. 25.

sins, impiously assure every class of offenders that they cannot come to him too heavily laden with crimes and offences, and that it is foolishness to think of mending their lives by way of preparing themselves to appear before him?—"Abstain from all appearance of evil" is the injunction of Paul.—"Be ye perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect," is the exhortation of our Saviour himself to those who came to him, and by him directed to be enforced wherever his Gospel is preached. Can we turn with patience—can we even turn without a mixture of disgust and horror, to the impious reverse of all this, delivered to the ignorant multitude in the coarsest language which vulgar fanaticism can furnish?—"This man"—says this Village Reformer—"receiveth sinners; he came on purpose to save them, and bids you come, that he may save you. Think not *foolishly* first to *mend* yourselves, and then come to him; you will never be better till you do come—

"Come needy, come GUILTY, come loathsome and bare;
 YOU CAN'T COME TOO FILTHY—come just as you are*."

* Burder's Village Sermons, vol. 1, Sermon XX. Seventh Edition.

Is it not insufferable that a man should dignify this trumpery with the title of SERMONS? Is it not lamentable that such discourses and such doctrines should find their way to the hand of the credulous people in all quarters of the country, and that Sermons of this stamp should pass through numerous Editions, to the utter exclusion of every work by which the sound principles of religion might be diffused, and society be rescued from the dominion of those errors by which it is misled, and those crimes by which it is corrupted?

What says the parable of our Saviour, and how does it correspond with the language quoted above?—"And when the King came in to see his guests, he saw there a man that had not on a *wedding garment*.

"And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having a wedding garment? *And he was speechless.*

"Then said the King to the servant, Bind him, hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth*."—Can we

* Matt. 22.

forbear to contrast this with the doctrine taught and the invitation given in direct defiance of it? Yet these Evangelists spare no efforts to spread their principles, and they denounce as infidels all who do not acknowledge *them* to be the Preachers of the true *Gospel faith*.

If any work appears which bears about it the tone and colouring of *their* opinions, or contains even a remote and indirect approbation of them, it is admitted into their circle. If it is an avowed defence of their doctrines, the writer is extolled with the utmost ardour, and his work procured with the utmost eagerness; and though its admiring readers should be wholly unable to understand it, yet, if it descant on the usual mysteries, and produce the usual texts, all agree to applaud it as truly Evangelical; for this term *Evangelical* is employed to sum up all merit and perfection in a single word, and is well calculated to conceal the ignorance of those who wish to be thought judges. It is something like the term *nervous* in physic; it serves to describe every ailment which the doctor does not understand.—If, on

the other hand, any work is given to the public which examines and exposes their opinions, the writer is instantly denounced as an unbeliever; no calumny is spared that can repress its circulation; the closer and more convincing the arguments, the more are they reprobated as specious and delusive; for REASON, when applied to refute *their* errors, is always most *carnal* when it is most *conclusive*.

The labours of the most learned are treated by them with supercilious contempt. They speak of what they are pleased to term ‘the pride of human learning’ with all that disdain which marks the pride of human ignorance. They contrive to convert their disgrace into their glory, and turn that imbecility which should be their shame into their consolation. The man who, by a course of long and arduous study, has qualified himself for the labours of his most high and awful calling, that man is classed, with a sneer, among the worldly wise; the treasures of divine grace are not for him—he has no interest in the true inheritance.—No. These genuine descendants of Popery acknowledge no true title but in *the Pretender*.

It is impossible not to remark with what dogmatical assurance they affirm or deny in matters of faith; and how industriously they strive, by mutual puffing and quotation, to give weight and circulation to their own opinions. Instead of defending their assertions by argument, or supporting them by reason, they quote others of the same sect who hold the same doctrines, and thus the unthinking are deceived into a reception of them. But others there are who well know that *mere authority* in such case is but *assertion repeated*; that we must not attend to what men *say*, but to what they *prove*; and that a blockhead does not demonstrate his opinion to be true by merely producing the testimony of other blockheads in support of it.

Every publication in which morality is supported against the destructive influence of their doctrines is studiously kept from the sight of their disciples. This can only be done by representing them as containing the worst poison of infidelity, and to this mode therefore they have recourse. They have not an authority to suppress the periodical REVIEWS, but they have

a power, by Evangelical anathema, to interdict the perusal of them, and this power they do not fail to exert ; no mode of attack is left untried ;—sometimes they are to be treated as utterly beneath regard.—“What,”—says one of the Evangelists at the Alexandrine close of his labours,—“What will that terrible phalanx, the REVIEWERS, say ?—Oh ! that matter is easily settled : they, like wise men of Gotham, tell the world, even by the title-pages of their books, under whose service *they* have registered their brains and pens : the reader who minds them (I speak of them as a body) proves he has no mind of his own *.”—

At other times a more terrific warfare must be made, and the crime and danger of perusing them is then arrayed in all its horrors.—“When asked,” says another, lamentingly alluding to some of his flock, “why they do not visit the theatres, they tell us, that they disapprove of the actors, and that it is a sin to minister to the support of such an infamous profession. But it is the constant practice of these very persons to take in Magazines, or periodical

* Rowland Hill’s Village Dialogues, vol. 4, p. 175.

REVIEWS, the writers of which, from behind the ambush of literature, scatter abroad principles of scepticism and infidelity *."

* SERMON 'On the Danger of reading improper Books,' preached at the monthly association, Oct. 8, 1807, by the Rev. John Clayton, jun.—This Evangelical Preceptor has affixed a List of Books, to which he is pleased to give the important sanction of his approbation. But he has omitted one of great utility, and which he might himself consult with advantage—AN ENGLISH GRAMMAR. If his Sermon should reach a Second Edition, he will himself do well to *review* the passage cited above. To talk of scattering abroad *principles from behind an ambush* is to jumble literal with metaphorical expression in a manner that one should hope even a schoolboy would have avoided.

His review might be extended to many passages of this discourse, which require to be lowered to a tone of more becoming humility; for example,—“I must beg leave to say a few words to tutors and governesses; to you is committed a serious charge—the formation of character. Much depends on the books read in your schools. *Apply our previous directions* to their choice.”—Page 36.

It were well if those who rail so vehemently against self-righteousness would substitute less of self-conceit in the place of it.

Some passages deserve his more serious *review*; among others, that in which he enjoins those who have erred *during the day*—“to close their engagements by penitentially casting their guilt on their compassionate Saviour.” Page 30.—He has no warrant from Scripture to authorize such conduct, nor can he produce a single passage from the Gospel which would justify such advice. On the contrary, there is no lesson that can more completely confound the moral judgment, or destroy the moral principle, than that which

These pious Pontiffs never condescend to prove their assertions. They deal out their

teaches an offender, of whatever description, to *cast his guilt upon the innocent*. The Gospel never intended to initiate mankind in a practice so repugnant to every feeling of justice, and so hostile to every dictate of truth.

Mr. Clayton informs the Christian world—that “a large library may be composed of those works alone in which there is nothing objectionable or deleterious.”—This may be true; but whether the booksellers of this kingdom can furnish such a happy collection seems matter of doubt; it should appear *not* by his sending us to fetch our materials so far a-field.—“Christians,” says this great Divine,—“you are under no necessity to seek materials from the Heathenish TYRIANS for the erection of your glorious temple of knowledge; there are enough in *the land of ISRAEL, and the precincts of JERUSALEM.*” (Page 24.)

The catalogue of Authors which this Reverend Gentleman has pleased thus publicly to specify and recommend begins with Homer, Hesiod, the Argonautica, Æschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, Pindar, Theognis, Herodotus, Thucydides, Xenophon, Polybius, Diodorus Siculus, &c. To these Greek writers are added a list of Latin Poets, Historians, and Orators; and these again are followed by a long roll of English writers, moral, historical, theological, political, and poetical, to the number of about one hundred. And as this catalogue of writers, *Greek, Roman, and English*, is to go forth to the learned world with the consecrative seal of Mr. Clayton to their respective merits, it becomes necessary to proceed in the affair with due caution.—“This catalogue,”—says he, with a gravity becoming the great occasion,—“might be considerably extended; but I study *brevity*. It is only *necessary for ME to add*, that the recommendation of these books is *not to be considered* as expressive of *MY approbation of every* particular sentiment they contain.”

condemnation with the air of persons who can neither deceive nor be deceived. It is curious to observe the tone of authority with which they send forth their excommunication into the commonwealth of literature. They never condescend to produce any evidence to testify that their invectives are not wholly without foundation; they are so accustomed to make *their own* the measure of every other man's *faith*, and they meet with such entire acquiescence in the circle of their own followers, that they seem to claim a prescriptive right to libel all who hold an opinion opposite to their own. These Evangelical DISSENTERS exercise, as by charter, a right to differ from others in matters of faith, and to abuse and vilify all that *differ from them*.

There is one striking circumstance that demands peculiar remark. These high-strained pretenders to godliness, who deny the power of the sinner to help himself, take good care

It would indeed be a grievous injustice if this writer's reputation should be injured by the occasional unsoundness of opinion in writers whom it is more than probable he may never have read, and for whose sentiments he ought no more to be made answerable than the compiler of LACKINGTON'S CATALOGUE, from which it is not unlikely that his own was abridged.

always to attribute his *saving change* to the blessed effect of some sermon preached by some one or other of *their* Evangelical fraternity. They always hold *themselves* up to the multitude as the instruments of producing all those marvellous conversions which they relate. No instance is recorded in their Saints' Calendar of any sinner resolving, in consequence of a reflective and serious perusal of the Scriptures, to lead a new life. No instance of a daily perusal of the Bible producing a daily progress in virtuous habits.—No, the *Gospel* has no such effect—It is always the *Gospel Preacher*, who works the miracle; it was some text which he preached from that first struck out the spark of Evangelical faith. The grace of God may produce all *moral* reformation, for that is progressive and gradual, but GOD THE PRIEST must stand foremost in all the great works of *instantaneous conversion*, and, at the feast of praise, must come in for his full share from the crowd of the faithful.—

“ Joy to the Master of the feast,
His name our souls for ever bless ;
To God the King, *and God the Priest*,
A loud Hosannah round the place.”—

Watts's Hymns, b. 3, h. 18.

They place their own interpretations of the Scripture doctrines on the same level of authority with the Scripture itself,—and whoever does not subscribe to them must expect a plentiful sprinkling of abuse from the shower-bath of Calvinism; the terms Infidel, Heathen, Socinian, Deist, Atheist, with all the abusive epithets which their Evangelic spleen can furnish, will be vented against him; for this order of believers do not seem to conceive the rules of Christian candour, or of common justice, to be binding upon them. They never think it necessary to produce evidence to substantiate their charges. With them assertion supplies the place of authority; for it is with their libels as with their doctrines—they consider *proof* as destroying the very essence of *faith*.

After all, in what does the grievous crime of reading REVIEWS consist?—The material mischief is hinted pretty broadly by this faithful Remonstrant, who declares that he will undertake to prove that some religious professors have, for years, by taking in these and other evil works, “contributed twice as much

to the spread of ruinous opinions *as to the support of their Evangelical Minister*, who labours to instruct them in the things which make for their peace *.”—

Such a delicate hint, so publicly sent forth to the world, stamps a *real dignity* on the character of the Minister. It marks that honourable feeling of independence which draws a line of separation between such minds and those of a *mean and mercenary* cast. It is to be hoped that the faithful will relieve themselves for the future from the reproach thus thrown out against them, and not expose themselves to the lash of such home-felt provocation. We trust that hereafter the fruits of their faith will more and more abound in the pocket of their Evangelical Directors, that they may say, with increased joy, that in godliness there is *great gain*.

But these Saints, who would stop their ears if you should mention with admiration the name of a Garrick or a Siddons ;—who think

* Sermon by the Rev. John Clayton, jun. “On the Danger,” &c. p. 18.

it a sin to support such an *infamous profession* as that, through the medium of which a Milton, a Johnson, an Addison, and a Young, have laboured to mend the heart;—these Saints, who, if you were to take their own word for it, are really too good for the world they live in, how does their Evangelical Pastor find *their* holy leisure occupied?—Let us hear:—“ Upon entering some houses (says he) I have been struck with the following inconsistency:—the heads of them would not suffer any member of the family to read the nonsense and wickedness which the vagabond pamphlet-sellers bring to their doors; yet I have seen lying on their table or sideboard a volume which they themselves had been reading, calculated to instruct their household in the darkest mysteries of vice*.”—What! publicly professing a zeal for the deepest mysteries of godliness, and privately instructing themselves in the DARKEST MYSTERIES OF VICE!!! This is a sad secret disclosed. It was somewhat unguarded to publish the fact; but surely it should either have been

* Sermon by the Rev. John Clayton, jun. “ On the Danger,” &c. p. 17.

reported with the most indignant censure, or not at all. Is such rank and impious hypocrisy amongst his followers to be merely noticed as *inconsistency*? I know not what such sort of conduct may denote in the *Evangelical* world, but in the *moral* world we should certainly not have found so soft a term for it.

When we reflect how wonderfully the mind of every individual is influenced by early instruction; and the readiness with which we imbibe any opinions, however erroneous, or any doctrines, however irrational, according to the books put into our hands at a time of life when we are not 'competent to examine the foundation of those opinions, or the truth of those doctrines; we cannot but deem it of the greatest importance that such works only should be employed in the moral education of the youthful mind as may enlist all the faculties of its reason on the side of truth and virtue. It is well observed by a profound philosophical writer, that, "if the multitude must be led, it is of consequence surely that it should be led by enlightened conductors, by men who are able to distinguish truth from error, and to

draw the line between those prejudices which are innocent and salutary (if indeed there are any prejudices which are really salutary) and those which are hostile to the interest and virtue of mankind * ”

By what are those writings which strive to make religion subservient to private happiness and public virtue—by what are they to be superseded? By the Pilgrim's Progress!!!—Tillotson, Barrow, Atterbury, Newton, Locke, all must retire and give place to John Bunyan! Addison, Young, Johnson, Hawkesworth, names dear to religion and learning, must yield in veneration to the Tinker of Bedford!! It is round his bust that the new Evangelists bind their holy fillets! It is at his shrine they burn their incense of praise, and bring their burnt-offerings of adoration! The labours of one pious Editor are insufficient to illustrate his beauties †; the work of exposition is

* “Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind.” By Dugald Stewart. Page 31.

† A late Edition of the Pilgrim's Progress is published, with NOTES on the First Part, by the Rev. J. NEWTON and OTHERS, and on the Second Part, by the Rev. Dr. HAWKER.

allotted therefore to various hands, that each may have a chance for immortality, and that the annotations may be worthy of the text.— And they are so.

It is the exact coincidence of his doctrines with their own that endears him so powerfully to these anti-moralists. This it is that exalts him to the highest pedestal in their Pantheon. “Many,” say his Evangelical Editors, “have read this book with a kind of *rapturous pleasure*, though they have not understood the Author’s design *.”—It is fortunate for a certain class of Authors that there are so many readers of the description alluded to, that admire a work the more, the less they understand it. The present annotators, however, have given every assistance towards deciphering any difficulties that might stand in the way of a shallow comprehension. Take the following as a specimen :—

“ In the advice of Worldly Wiseman to Christian, you have a true picture of SELF-RIGHTEOUS MORALISTS, who are the *greatest*

* See Preface, p. 6.

enemies to young converts *.”—What opinion, it is natural to ask, do these persons hold that

* As a further sample of their utter hatred of moral virtue, and of those Teachers who enjoin the performance of our religious duties, I shall adduce the following Notes, that the public may be aware of the tendency of this work, and of the additional obligations they owe to the Editors of this body of Divinity.

(Note, p. 25.) “The *moralist* and *self-righteous* legalist are lulled up in a false peace, and see not the evil of their heart, or the sinfulness of sin, till the law does its office, by working wrath in the conscience.”—

These explanatory Notes require to be explained themselves. What is the meaning of “the law doing its office by working wrath in the conscience?” It would be well if these Evangelists would translate their jargon into something like common sense, that those who examine their doctrines might have a chance of understanding them.

The dull reader is thus assisted to understand the character of Ignorance :—

“In the character of IGNORANCE you have an exact description of our decent MORALISTS, who expect Heaven *as the reward of their good works*.” (Note, p. 128.)

Again—“The language of IGNORANCE exactly agrees with the *fashionable Divinity* which is *retailed* in most of our *modern pulpits*. They do not in words reject the Redeemer’s righteousness; but, by *the terms and conditions* which they enjoin, in reality they make it of none effect.” (Note, p. 153.)

In the Second Part of these ‘Hints’ I shall develop more fully the pernicious tendency of this very popular work. As an allegory, the Pilgrim’s Progress has amused children, who are naturally pleased with whatever relates to giants and

is so fatally false? It is this,—they “think that the *practice of morality* is sufficient to recommend them to the favour of God*”—A dreadful opinion this to be entertained in this profligate age! Considering the numbers in this city of London that recommend themselves to the notice of the Police Magistrates by the violation of the laws, and recollecting the assurance given to the public by one of the ablest and most active of those Magistrates †, that, “if the prevailing immorality and profligacy among the lower orders of the people are not checked, very serious consequences are to be dreaded ‡,” the community will not be much indebted to the Editors of John Bunyan for their endeavours to reverse this moral opinion. The practice of morality is quite sufficiently discoun-

castles; nothing else could have secured it a moment's attention beyond the age of infancy; but when its doctrines are to be taught as the religion of their riper years, it is necessary that the readers of it should be put upon their guard.

* Pilgrim's Progress, with Notes, by the Rev. Mr. Newton, Dr. Hawker, and others, p. 13.

† Mr. Colquhoun. See his Treatise on the Metropolis, p. 39.

‡ Ibid.

tenanced, without any assistance from this Tinker or his Commentators.

No work could be better calculated for the dissemination of the Evangelical principles, as they are called, than the Pilgrim's Progress *. It treats the *moral* law with as much vulgar derision as the most zealous of the fraternity could wish. They could not have made choice of a better vehicle for the propagation of *their* Gospel. The Tinker, we all know, made no pretensions to innocence or integrity of life; he wallowed in his vices with *humility*—he laid no claim to *merit*.—In the town in which he lived, he was even a

* The following extract from the VILLAGE DIALOGUES (Vol. III. Page 23) will serve to shew the high rank which this work holds in Evangelical estimation.

“ WOR.—The Pilgrim's Progress, I confess, is an inimitable Drama, and *beautifully* describes the state of the real Christian in his spiritual progress; yet BUNYAN, in the general way, happens to be the humble *treasure of Divinity in the poor man's cottage*; and *I fear* is not so often to be found in the study of a *contemplative Divine*.

“ LOV.—Sir, If God had conferred on me the honour of being the Author of *the Pilgrim's Progress*, *I should have been tempted to have been the proudest man upon earth*.”—

This is singing to the praise and glory of the TINKER with a vengeance! His JOURNEYMEN lay it on with a trowel.

premature example of coarse profaneness and vulgar debauchery; it was not difficult for him to teach the doctrine laid down in this his treasure of Divinity, that “it is then only we have right thoughts of God” when we believe that he abhors all purity of thought and holiness of life, or, as he more concisely, and with more elegance, expresses it,—“when he think that all our righteousness stinks under his nostrils *”—A precious Teacher this !!! If we may judge by the licentiousness that prevails in low life, he has made many pious converts to this conviction. Is it to be wondered that the Evangelical Missionaries should so industriously recommend such a companion to *their* altar as the Pilgrim’s Progress? Have they not reason to be proud of such a disciple †?

* See the Pilgrim’s Progress, p. 153. The *Variorum* Edition.

† This renowned work has been given to posterity in a *poetical* version, with explanatory Notes, by the Rev. George Burder, Author of Village Sermons, &c.

This gentleman has shown himself not less gifted as a Poet than a Preacher. His poem opens with uncommon spirit and *delicacy* :—

“ ’Twas in the silent watches of the night,
When airy visions please us or affright,

Is it at all to be wondered at that these
Preaching Missionaries should be desirous to

Fast lock'd in sleep's embrace, I *dreamt a dream*;—
 The Pilgrim's journey was the fruitful theme.
 I thought I saw him *in a certain place*.”—

The following lines were never exceeded in sublimity
 by the production of any ballad-maker within time of me-
 mory :—

“ Great Beelzebub, the captain *of* this fiend,
 Design'd my ruin : therefore *to* this end
 He sent him harness'd out ; and he, with rage
 That hellish *was*, did fiercely *me* engage ;
 But blessed Michael helped *me*, and I,” &c.

What constable ever exercised his staff over an intruding
 crowd in language more appropriate than the following ?—

“ Fast running *back*, each bare apostate cries,
Back ! back ! in that dark valley we have been,
 And there such horrid spectres we have seen !
 There sport the fiends and dragons of the pit ;
Back ! back ! with us, if you have any wit.”

The Pilgrim, it seems, had no *wit*, so he ventures on,
 ‘ sword in hand,’ through such a road as never before felt the
 print of mortal foot :—to the right a ditch,—to the left a
 quag :—as the word *quag* is a novelty in our language, the
 reader must presume that a quag-mire is intended, but that
 the mire is sunk, or, as lawyers would call it, is *merged*, for
 the sake of the measure. But it would be a pity to deprive the
 lovers of poetry of the description itself.—The concluding
 line exhibits a *new* and beautiful specimen of that poetical
 figure which is called *comparison* :—

“ It was a dangerous path the pilgrim trod ;
 Sure never mortal trac'd so dire a road :
 On his right hand a ditch tremendous lay,
 A dang'rous QUAG on t'other side the way ;

exclude REVIEWS, and works of a similar kind
from the circle of their followers? Is it

To that, when carefully the ditch he'd shun,
Into the *quag* his feet had nearly run ;
Avoiding that, 'twas hard to miss the ditch,
For now 'twas grown *almost as dark AS PITCH* *."

The pressing invitation of DEMAS, at *Lucre-hill*, is penned
in the true style of *Brokers'-row* :—

" Beyond the Plain of Ease, at LUCRE-HILL,
DEMAS salutes them—'Gentlemen,' he cried,
'*Pray have the goodness JUST* to turn aside,
And view this rich, this noble,' " &c.

But the poetical fervour of the Evangelist reaches its me-
ridian when he snatches CHRISTIAN, like a brand from the
burning, out of the path of *morality*, which he had been
persuaded to enter by the advice of that *lying knave*
WORLDLY WISEMAN.

" My counsel take—Yon pleasant village see :
Delightful spot!—'tis called MORALITY ;
Thither with all convenient speed repair,
That honest man *Legality* dwells there.
Apply to him, you'll get a speedy cure,
Nor ever more fanatic fears endure.
There live in credit—live in pleasure there ;
Nor shame, nor persecution, ever fear.
Then Christian paus'd. 'If this,' said he, 'be true
There's little more to suffer or to do.'
He turn'd aside to reach the place he saw,
And seek salvation by the *moral* law.
But ah ! no ease he found ; his fears rose higher ;
The mount he pass'd shot forth devouring fire.—
Mount Sinai fill'd his very soul with dread ;
It seem'd just falling on his guilty head.

* (Page 34.) The present quotations refer to the Second Edition of
this poem.

not of course that they should reprobate every work in which their opinions are sifted, and their doctrines discussed *? A bad cause

'Twas then, his conscience press'd with sin and fear,
Just then he saw Evangelist appear.

'Christian! what business have you here?' he cried,

'What *lying knave* has turn'd your feet aside?'

' 'Twas *Worldly Wiseman*, rightly is he nam'd.' "

This denuciation of the *moral law* is the burden of the ballad. It is hard to say which is most to be preferred, the piety or the poetry.

* The Evangelical fraternity, though they rail with such rancour against all Reviews not attached to their interest, take care to review their own writings with abundant approbation. The *ECLECTIC REVIEW* was instituted for that purpose. The pompous eulogium pronounced upon it by Mr. Clayton, jun. in his *Condemnation Sermon*, is written in a tone of arrogance that is truly ludicrous. The *EVANGELICAL MAGAZINE* also, which circulates every month the number of about *twenty-four thousand*, sets apart a portion of its valuable pages to *review* the productions of the Evangelical press, and to display their manifold merits. The *learned* Editor, in the instance I am about to adduce, has shewn to the public how well qualified he is to decide and dictate in the republic of letters. In the last number of this renowned work, this *learned* Editor expresses some doubt respecting the faith due to a literary discovery announced in the *Marseilles Gazette*, Oct. 20th; and, winding up his detail, he exclaims, with all the poignancy of *classical* scepticism,

Credat Judæus Appelles*!

This immortal *PAINTER* is here, for the first time, ranked with the sons of circumcision!!! the Jew *APPELLES*!!!

* See the *Evangelical Magazine* of last month, (Nov.) p. 527.

has no chance for success but in striving to asperse the character, and, if possible, to destroy the credibility, of the witnesses produced against it. Those who wish that truth should be extracted can stand firm and fearless, whatever evidence is produced; they have no wish to shun inspection or escape inquiry; but whoever has doctrines to establish or maintain that will not bear the inspection of reason will endeavour to escape its power by appealing from its jurisdiction.

So strenuous are the efforts of these new Gospel Leaders to root out of the minds of

As this learned Editor and theological *Reviewer* takes his Latin from hearsay, it may be useful to him, for the avoidance of future blunders, to inquire from whence the quotation is made before he ventures to decorate his Evangelical labours with such specimens of classic lore. The line with which he meant, in the present instance, to sanction his incredulity, he will find in Horace, Sat. 5, l. 100. I refer him to the original, that he may not hereafter corrupt the text of the Classics as he does the text of the Scriptures. His Latin and his Logic may pass muster with the readers of John Bunyan and the *Village Sermons*.—Nonsense makes no stumbling-block in the way of *their* creed. With them absurdity is sure to be well received if it comes well recommended.

the multitude all veneration for the divine lessons of our religion, that, not satisfied with rendering virtue and morality of no estimation, they even make the Gospel of God defeat itself, by openly teaching the people that our Saviour was talking in banter when he enjoined obedience to the Commandments, as necessary to eternal life. An Evangelical Preacher, whom we have before had occasion to notice, declares this most expressly. He takes, as his text, that part of the Gospel in which the young man inquires of the Redeemer himself the way to life eternal; and he represents the whole as a trial of logical skill, in which an ignorant question is parried by an *ironical* answer.—“Observe,” says he, “the masterly and judicious mode in which the assault is made; to his inquiry, *What good shall I do that I may have eternal life?* Jesus replies, *If thou wilt enter into life, keep the Commandments.* By this reply does he either insinuate the possibility of purchasing Heaven by *obedience*, or *seriously* advise the *persisting* in

such an attempt? NO*.”—I declare it makes one shudder to see any one, standing in the awful station of a public Teacher of Religion thus distorting its instruction, and destroying its efficacy. How will it be with us in the end, if those, who should be the instrument of reclaiming the ignorant from guilt and error, thus continue to lure them to the one, and lose them in the other? I do protest that I know not by what fatal perversion of intellect any persons can bring themselves thus to think and to teach; and that, not content with delivering such delusive impiety from the pulpit, they should deliberately circulate it through the medium of the press. It is to me matter of utter astonishment how any man can read such Sermons, with his mind broad awake, and not throw them on the floor with disgust and indignation.

* SERMONS chiefly designed to elucidate some of the leading doctrines of the Gospel, by the Rev. Edward Cooper, Rector of Hamstale Ridware, Chaplain to the Earl of Courtown, &c. I find this MR. COOPER'S SERMONS in Mr. Clayton's commendatory List of Books. The reason is obvious: he is an Evangelical bird of the true feather.

Not only do these anti-moral Missionaries exert themselves at home, but every effort which the ardour of fanaticism and vanity can inspire is employed to ‘Evangelise the Heathen,’ as it is called ; and not only are the more opulent of their deluded followers stripped, but even the poorest among them are plundered*, to support the expense of foreign missions, conducted in that spirit of ignorant and ill-directed enthusiasm which the Scripture expressly reprobates as a ‘zeal without knowledge ;’ missions teaching the mystic doctrines of Calvinism to savages that cannot count their fingers ; and inculcating the mysteries of an abstruse creed to poor wretches struggling with famine—accustomed to follow the lead of their passions—and whose minds are so dark,

* Under the title of *EVANGELICANA*, in the *Evangelical Magazine* for the last month, is the following article :—

“ The following anecdote, relating to the journey of Mr. COLLISON and Mr. FREY, to make collections for the Missionary Society, may be worthy of notice :—At —, in Yorkshire, after a handsome collection on the preceding evening, a poor man, whose wages are about 28s. per week, brought the next morning, at breakfast-time, a donation of twenty guineas. Our friends hesitated to receive it, doubting whether it was consistent with his duty to his family and the world to contribute such a sum ; when he answered to

as with great difficulty to admit the plainest and most simple principles of common honesty.

If those writers; whom I have expressly and by name adverted to, were the only persons engaged in the propagation of those principles from the pulpit and from the press, which go so directly to degrade, in the estimation of the multitude, the true practical religion of Christianity, with all its venerable train of moral duties and moral feelings, I should not have thought it worth while to employ so much

the following effect:—"Before I knew the grace of our Lord I was a poor drunkard: I never could save a shilling. My family were in beggary and rags; but, since it has pleased God to renew me by his grace, we have been industrious and frugal; we have not spent many idle shillings; and we have been enabled to put something into the Bank; and this I freely offer to the blessed cause of our Lord and Saviour.—This is the **SECOND** donation of this same poor man, to the **SAME AMOUNT!!!**"

Whatever these Evangelists may think of such conduct, they ought to be ashamed of thus basely taking the advantage of this poor ignorant enthusiast, and depriving his family, *in times like these*, of such a sum as **FORTY GUINEAS**, when their united earnings amounted only to 28s. per week. Instead of meanly profiting by a flash of fanaticism in this poor creature's mind, they had better have added something to his hard earnings, and have counselled him to preserve them, in order to provide against the various unforeseen distresses by which poverty, in old age, is too often overtaken, and against which it is for the most part very ill provided.

of my time and pains to press the subject on the attention of the public. But what I have here given is only *a specimen* of the manner in which this hostile confederacy is conducted; the numbers concerned in, and connected with it, are immense, almost beyond belief. These Evangelical anti-moralists swarm in every town in the kingdom, and are daily multiplying their disciples in every hamlet and village throughout the country *. And the entire devotion of the lower classes to these itinerant instructors, who train them to a systematic contempt of the moral law, and withdraw them from all dependence on the practice of their duty as men and as Christians, is such as demands that at least the community should be put upon its guard, and that those to whom its welfare and prosperity are entrusted should not sleep at their post,

* In the very front of the Evangelical Magazine for the last month, (of which work the Author of *Village Sermons* is the Editor,) an Advertisement is inserted for “an *active young Man*, who has suitable qualifications for an ITINERANT PREACHER, in a neighbourhood where there are *several populous Villages*. A Single Man,” it is added, “would be preferred.”

What is the object of all those laws, which make up the system of criminal jurisprudence, but to punish offenders against the *moral law*? What are the laws of God or man made to prevent, but offences against *morality*? What are murder, theft, forgery, fraud, and the long train of crimes which are punished, according to their degree of enormity, with fine, imprisonment, transportation, and death—what are these but so many violations of the *moral law* of the Gospel?—From what does sin and guilt of every kind arise, but from the neglect of it?—What is infidelity, intemperance, debauchery, gambling, and vice of every description, but so many breaches of *moral duty*?—What but a reformation of *morals* can save the nation from sinking under the weight of its private profligacy and its public crimes?—Are not the multitude enough excited, by the numerous temptations which assail them in this opulent and licentious metropolis, to violate the laws of morality, but they must be taught from the pulpit to slight it? Must the press be made an engine, and by the priesthood too! to destroy that *moral law*, on which alone the

foundations of the world can stand secure? Must the Divine word be perverted to the purpose of weakening the efficacy of virtue?—Must the crusade against morality be carried on under banners stolen from the altar of God?

At this tremendous crisis, England—unshrinking and alone—abandoned by all the vassal Powers of Europe—is still strong in courage and in hope. “We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed.” At this eventful period, surrounded by the wreck of empires, England is the great *ATLAS* that supports the moral world. Thus situated, it is more than ever necessary that she should cultivate that high tone of honourable feeling—that moral rectitude of mind—by which she stands distinguished above all the nations of the earth.—These have hitherto been the noble attributes of the national character; I trust they will long continue so to be. But the hope is visionary—the expectation is vain—if the public mind is gradually to slide under the

sway of a class of public instructors such as I have described.

To what I have said at present I shall add more hereafter.—In addressing myself as well to the Legislature as to the Public, I feel no intention, not the slightest, to excite a spirit of persecution towards those men whose teaching I protest against. I revere too much the private liberty of individuals, and that spirit of toleration which pervades and presides over that Constitution which is our glory and our boast—I revere these too much to wish that error of any kind should be opposed by any other resistance than Argument, or any other weapon than Reason.—But, holding, as I do, in the utmost veneration, the rights of private freedom and of private judgment, I still do not think that the Members of this new Spiritual Body should be favoured,—as to a certain degree they are,—by special immunities, and fostered by exclusive privileges. I do not think that the open and perpetual propagation of doctrines so hostile to moral virtue—so subversive of that public prosperity of which moral virtue is the

soul and the cement—should not only obtain a license with the readiest facility—but that such license should bring with it an exemption from certain burdens attached to other classes of the community. This, and much more, ought neither to be admitted nor endured.—The evil is not slight, far from it.—But, if it is to meet with encouragement instead of counteraction, the probable event may deserve to be considered while yet the preventive can be applied; because, when the event itself shall arrive, reflection may be nearer at hand than the remedy.

END OF THE FIRST PART.

H I N T S

TO THE

PUBLIC, AND THE LEGISLATURE,

ON THE

NATURE AND EFFECT

OF

Evangelical Preaching.

BY A BARRISTER.

PART THE SECOND.

THIRD EDITION.

“What remedies are fit for this disease—whether the fault be in the LAWS, or in the MEN—whether the cure be a work of time and patience, or of zeal and diligence, or whether any new expedient can be found to secure the ship from that storm which the swelling of two contrary tides seems to threaten—IS WHOLLY LEFT TO YOUR ADVICE.”

LORD CHANCELLOR NOTTINGHAM'S *Address to both Houses.*

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H I N T S,

&c.

PART II.

RELIGION, and the doctrines which religion inculcates, as they tend to form the character and to cast the manners of the great mass of the commonwealth, must ever be matter of anxious inquiry to us all. As the public instruction of individuals is meant to regulate their private conduct, it must influence them more or less, according to its efficacy, in all the relations, and concerns, and pursuits of civil life. Pregnant as it is, therefore, with practical consequences of such extensive importance, and embracing, as it does, the moral government of the community, it becomes mat-

ter of cautious delegation, even by the Supreme authority itself. But when this most momentous of all concerns,—this most sacred of all subjects,—is tampered with by any order of persons, who mistake the impulse of vanity for the influence of grace, and have nothing but their ignorance to plead in excuse for their presumption,—when this is the case,—and it is by far too much so—the affair is serious indeed.

The pastoral office, is an office of deep and lasting responsibility. It has much to regulate—much to restrain—much to fulfil. Even the wisest will enter upon it with diffidence, and the most upright will engage in it with caution. But the interested fanatic, and illiterate enthusiast, have no such distrust—no such hesitation. Where others pause with terror, they will leap blindfold. This is greatly to be deplored, but thus, it is, that “fools rush in, where angels fear to tread.” Goaded by zeal, and guided by self-conceit, they are neither deterred by the magnitude, nor dismayed by the importance of the station they assume.

But the community have a common interest

in the investigation of the principles which are thus disseminated, and the doctrines which are thus taught ; because they have a common stake in the practical consequences which arise out of them. It becomes us, therefore, to dissect them with attention, that we may at least be able to estimate their tendency, and thence to calculate on the probable effect of their circulation. This it behoves us to do. There is nothing in it that leads to oppression or intolerance. It has no tendency that way. Precaution is not persecution. It does not purvey to evil, but provides against it.

To this subject I have already devoted a portion of that leisure left me by my professional avocations ; and I shall devote more of that leisure to it hereafter. I have by no means done with it. It requires to be brought out fully, and to be placed, in all its bearings, under the public observation. Let this NEW PRIESTHOOD pass along in triumphal procession, and let them gather the ignorant and deluded vulgar at their heels. But do not let them expect that the whole community are to stand in

mute admiration ;—do not let them expect that all the thinking and reflective part of the British public are to be the muzzled and hood-winked spectators of the scene.

I was prepared to expect all the low and senseless ribaldry which this sect of *Gospel* ministers have poured forth. I knew that with them abuse would supply the place of argument, and that foul-mouthed calumny would be substituted for serious investigation. These illogical and unruly Saints, have shewn how much easier it is to revile than to refute. But, as I have already said, “These pious pontiffs never condescend to prove their assertions. They deal out their condemnation with the air of persons who can neither deceive nor be deceived. It is curious to observe the tone of authority with which they send forth their ex-communications into the commonwealth of literature. They never condescend to produce any evidence to testify that their invectives are not wholly without foundation : they are so accustomed to make *their own* the measure of every other man's *faith*, and they meet with such

entire acquiescence in the circle of their own followers, that they seem to claim a prescriptive right to libel all who hold an opinion opposite to their own. These *evangelical* DISSENTERS exercise, as by charter, a right to differ from others in matters of *faith*, and to abuse and vilify all that *differ from them* * ” They have fully and to the letter, exemplified what I affirmed, that—“ they place their own interpretations of the scripture doctrines on the same level of authority with the scripture itself—and whoever does not subscribe to them, must expect a plentiful sprinkling of abuse from the shower-bath of Calvinism ; the terms of infidel, heathen, socinian, deist, atheist, with all the abusive epithets, which their evangelical spleen can furnish, will be vented against him. For this order of believers do not seem to conceive the rules of Christian candour or of common justice to be binding upon them. They never think it necessary to produce evidence to substantiate their charges. With them, assertion supplies the place of authority ; for it is with their libels, as with their doctrines, they con-

* Vide “Hints, &c.” p. 122.

sider *proof* as destroying the very essence of *faith* *.”

If, instead of defaming me, they had defended themselves, they would have employed the weapons of their spiritual warfare to much better purpose. I can assure these mortified Priests that I have a very cool contempt for their abuse ; but I would caution them in future, not to shew so much of the cloven foot as is visible in those periodical publications of which they are the ostensible conductors. Thinking men will compare their affected candour and canting humility in the pulpit, with that malignant venom and dictatorial pride which they discover from the press, whenever their opinions are controverted, or their doctrines attacked. Argument may remove prejudice, and reason may rectify error; to their influence my mind will always be open, and by them, my judgment will always be reformed. But the evangelical host resort to no such modes of conviction. Their weapons of controversy are of a different temper. We may lament this evil, but we cannot cure it; for so long as

* “Hints,” p. 124.

a difference of doctrine or opinion exists, scurrility will ever be the refuge of fanatics, and calumny the resource of fools *.

From this class of writers much of argument or information was not to be expected. Reason with them is neither much cultivated, nor much cared for. It is considered as no better than a vapour, that would bedim rather than enlighten, that empyrean of faith in which they profess to live and move. Their contempt of morality is moreover so extreme, that their vulgar vocabulary, ample as it is, can scarcely furnish them with epithets sufficiently abusive for its advocate.—One should

* Mr. BURDER when he reviews “the Hints,” in the *Evangelical Magazine*, and Mr. CLAYTON in the *Eclectic*, give a specimen of criticism which unfolds, and that not a little, the character and temper of their sect. They justify the sound and shrewd observation once made by an eloquent lawyer, that “in the mind of man there is no more instigating temptation to the most remorseless oppression, than the rancour and malice of irritated pride and wounded vanity.” THESE GENTLEMEN ARE THEIR OWN REVIEWERS—this is as it should be! But when public defaulters become the auditors of their own accounts, we may predict that the balance will always turn out to be greatly *in their favour*.

have thought that they would have manifested somewhat of the Christian virtue of mildness, if it were only out of compliment—not to their adversary—but to themselves and their cause. But it seems they have no desire to be respected even for this solitary virtue. One can get from them neither pleasure nor profit. All claim to *merit* is so utterly discarded from their humble pretensions, that they really seem to be vain of their ill-deserving.

But they are not without apology. The truth is they deal out their praise with such lavish profusion towards each other, that they have none to bestow, even in Christian charity, out of the pale of their own communion. It is matter of regret certainly, that an article so pleasing in the distribution, should be thus circumscribed; but perhaps they are sensible that beyond this limit it would be of no value; it is this, probably, that induces them to confine it to that circle in which alone it can be of any estimation.

Notwithstanding the assumed humility and affected self-abasement of these modern apos-

tles, they resent, as we may perceive, with sufficient asperity, every resistance to their claim of spiritual pre-eminence, and display an arrogance of resentment against whoever would abate any thing of their infallibility in matters of faith. Fancying themselves the regenerated favourites of heaven, they value themselves, of course, upon this exclusive distinction. They alone are the *serious* Christians—all the world beside, contains only a motley mixture of the infidel and the ungodly. They are the elect of the flock, and graze in green pastures;—the rest are lost sheep, black with the rot of their original corruption, and outcasts from the fold of faith.—Lifted up as they are in their vision of vanity to the highest heaven, they look down with affected pity on the creatures of this world. They fancy themselves taught, as by special favour, from above, and by a very natural progress, in which their fanaticism panders to their pride, they soon come to consider all human knowledge as beneath their attainment. Human reason, compared with the light that floats round their holy temples, becomes in their estimation, no

better than a carnal varnish which throws its delusive glare over the unsightly picture of human depravity.

There is one great disadvantage to which the opponents of this NEW SPIRITUAL POWER are exposed.—Its members having assumed and appropriated to themselves the exclusive title of gospel preachers and evangelical ministers, whoever attempts to reprobate or expose the falsehood and evil tendency of their doctrines, is instantly denounced as an enemy to the GOSPEL, and one who cannot bear the system of EVANGELICAL truth; thus they roundly insist upon, and take for granted, the very fact you deny; which is, that their doctrines are neither derived from the one, or consistent with the other;—and they forthwith proceed to revile you as a reprobate and an unbeliever.

This was exactly the sophistry employed by the JESUITS;—they assumed to be exclusively the followers of JESUS; and when, at length, their doctrines were drawn into discussion, and their proceedings excited alarm, they then did, as their imitators do in the present day, they pleaded their *title*, without proving it, and pro-

ceeded to argue down their opponents with such logic as the following :—The Jesuits are the disciples of Jesus : whosoever opposes the disciples of Jesus, opposes Jesus ; the enemies of the Jesuits, therefore, are the enemies of Christ and his Gospel.—The multitude, who did not perceive the fallacy that lurked in the *premises*, thought the *conclusion* irresistible. But *experience* at length discovered to them, that this argument was unsound, and their senses by degrees reversed the error of their understanding. The power of the Jesuits declined—and their imposing *title*, grew at last into a proverbial epithet, expressive of all that is equivocating, and all that is base.

I have perused Dr. Hawker's Letter * with becoming attention. He expresses,—rather awkwardly to be sure,—his sense of “ the honour I have conferred upon him,” and “ the obligations I have laid him under”—declares his resolution to strap the pamphlet over his shoulder, and like Job in days of yore, “ to bind it as a crown to him ;” and then, in a pleasing tone of self-applause informs me, that

* A Letter to a Barrister, in answer, &c.

did I but know what *he knows*, and enjoy what *he enjoys*, I should follow the footsteps of those who have returned from the promised land; “laden with the richest clusters of grapes, and figs, and pomegranates.”—This is really a tempting description! I almost wonder that any should have *returned* at all from a spot so productive—I suspect all was not right, and I greatly fear that were I to follow the *new* gospel guides, instead of the *old*, that I should have occasion to call to mind the admonition which warns us to beware how we attempt to gather GRAPES OF THORNS, OR FIGS OF THISTLES.

So much for the doctor's compliments and good wishes. I shall advert next to his answers and his arguments.

He has totally omitted to explain on what ground it is he vindicates his public declaration that “he SHALL NOT RECOMMEND HUMAN STRENGTH TO EXERT ITSELF IN ACTS OF MORAL VIRTUE TOWARDS ITS OWN SALVATION.”—Besides, there is here a contradiction from which the Doctor will find it difficult to extricate himself. How can he admit the existence of

human strength, as he here does, and yet abstain from *recommending its exertion*, or how can this human strength be made to consist with that *utter helplessness*, for which he elsewhere so strenuously contends.

He has not attempted to prove that—"MAN IS WHOLLY INCAPABLE OF DOING ANY THING TOWARDS HIS OWN REFORMATION,"—which he was bound to do, in order to justify his abstaining from all exhortation to that effect. He has not attempted to reconcile his doctrine to the PARABLES which distinctly contradict it. Neither has he shewn the utility of preaching to such helpless machines as he describes mankind to be;—nor explained on what principle either himself, or his evangelical brethren, receive their maintenance at the hands of those to whose change from bad to good, they can contribute nothing.—All this the doctor passes by in silence.

He has adduced no authority from the gospel to warrant his declaring that the salvation of mankind is NOT SUSPENDED ON THE PERFORMANCE OF THEIR MORAL DUTIES—that the gospel has NEITHER IFS NOR BUTS, NEI-

THESE TERMS NOR CONDITIONS.—He has shrunk from the examination of every passage of scripture which was produced in opposition to this doctrine, of all others the most delusive and the most dangerous.

He has produced no testimony from the gospel to confirm the assurance given by him to the multitude, that the grace of God “RISES HIGHER AND HIGHER IN PROPORTION AS THE MISERABLE OBJECTS OF SIN AND INIQUITY SINK LOWER AND LOWER.”

It behoved him to shew—which he has wholly omitted—in what manner a COVENANT can exist WITHOUT TERMS OR CONDITIONS.—The very supposition is absurd; and a man must either think very superficially, or not think at all, that on a subject requiring the deepest consideration, can advance positions so childish and contradictory.

He has not in any manner referred to the gospel to support his doctrine, that PARDON, MERCY, and PEACE, are UNCONDITIONALLY bestowed by virtue of an *everlasting covenant* which cannot be FRUSTRATED BY HUMAN FOLLY, and which MAN CANNOT BY ANY AFTER-ACT DE-

STROY. If this doctrine of an *everlasting* UNCONDITIONAL *covenant* really exists in the gospel, it could surely not be difficult to point it out. But this divine offers the difficulty itself, as an excuse for evading it. “It would be the work (says he) of a distinct treatise, and not the subject of a letter.” The doctor’s admirers may be satisfied with this kind of *reasoning*;—it is in *their* way;—it is a dexterous mode of getting rid of the objector, without replying to the objection. But he leaves me to *make myself* informed on this subject. Really this mode of defence is admirable. He advances a doctrine as fundamentally true, which has, in fact, no foundation at all, and when called upon to support it, he throws the *onus probandi* on its opponent.

Such is the doctor’s mode of *answering*. It is, no doubt, very satisfactory, to himself,—and to his brethren,—who always fancy that they maintain an opinion, as long as they refuse to give it up. But it is not so satisfactory to those who think that his answer should have contained a *reply* to the objections urged

against his assertions, instead of a *repetition* of them.

But it is vain to inquire from, or contend with, this class of INSTRUCTORS. You can never get a plain answer to a plain question. Ask them in the midst of their harangue, to explain any difficulty that arises out of their doctrines, and they lead you into the wilderness of mystery, lose themselves and you in a maze of texts without connection, and terms without meaning; and after all—like dancers in a minuet—they end where they began.

The doctor is somewhat wrathful against Dr. BLAIR, whose *moral* discourses I had presumed to contrast with the *evangelical* effusions of Mr. TOPLADY; and he *modestly* “ventures to believe, that there are many who appreciate very highly the elegance of Dr. Blair as a writer, who have a *sovereign contempt* for his principles as a DIVINE.”—He is compelled, however reluctantly, to allow that Dr. Blair did enforce and inculcate the MORAL precepts of the gospel; but he endeavours to defend him against the sad evil of so doing, by suggesting that the

doctor could not have recommended them as of any value in themselves, or have urged the practical observance of them as having any essential concern with their future salvation. "I would hazard an opinion, (says he) that where he is most earnest in enforcing the practice of *morality*, his design was to enforce it as so many evidences that a work of grace is wrought in the heart. He meant it as the *effect*, not the cause of godliness."—And by this very *luminous* and *sensible* comment, we are hereafter to illustrate and *explain away* the *morality* of Dr. Blair!!!

Perhaps at some future time, the doctor himself (or his Eclectic reviewers,) will condescend to explain what he means that the reader should understand, when he is told that Dr. Blair meant to enforce the practice of morality "as the effect, not the cause of godliness."—What is godliness, but the practical fulfilment of those moral duties of religion, which God himself hath enjoined?—What legitimate or intelligible distinction, then can be taken between godliness and morality?—If it is important that these anti-moralists should

be admired, it is at least as important that they should be understood*.

* As the new divines aspire to all kinds of glory, they do not hesitate privately “to snatch a grace” from every class of writers. Doctor Hawker *prays in aid* of Mr. BURKE, and his letter to the Duke of Bedford, on the affair of his pension from the Crown, is compelled to contribute a portion of its eloquence; although, stripped as it is of its connection, it makes but a very sorry figure in its new alliance.

Mr. Burke thus begins his letter to the noble Duke,
“My Lord,

“I could hardly flatter myself with the hope that so early in the season I should have to *acknowledge obligations* to the Duke of Bedford and to the Earl of Lauderdale. These noble persons have *lost no time in conferring upon me that sort of honour*, which it is alone within their competence, and which it is certainly *most congenial to their nature and their manners to bestow*.”

Dr. Hawker commences his letter to me, thus:

“Sir,

“I know not to whom I have to make my *acknowledgments for that sort of honour conferred upon me* in the pamphlet entitled “Hints, &c.” But to whomsoever this tribute is due, I certainly would *lose no time* in expressing a proper sense of the *obligations* you have laid me under, and of giving the answer which is so imperiously demanded from me.”

And speaking of his former opponents, the doctor adds, —“They poured forth a full heaped measure of censures upon me, and in a way *best suited to their mind and manners to bestow*.”

Mr. Burke’s letter proceeds thus:—

“To be ill spoken of, in whatever language they speak,

The doctor talks a great deal about the *new birth*, but he evades, as usual, any expla-

by the zealots of the new sect in philosophy and politics, of which these noble persons think so charitably, and of which others think so justly, *to me, is no matter of uneasiness* or surprise. To have incurred *the displeasure* of the Duke of Orleans or the Duke of Bedford, *to fall under the censure* of Citizen Brissot, or of his friend the Earl of Lauderdale, *I ought to consider as proofs not the least satisfactory*, that I have produced some part of the effect I proposed by my endeavours."

The doctor, adopting the same strain, says,

"You deceive yourself, sir, if you fancy that any thing contained in your pamphlet, hath provoked my *displeasure*.—

—"And for the poor and feeble hand I bear in the honourable service of a preacher of these divine truths, *the abuse* of such a thing as me, *I ought to consider as a matter not a little satisfactory*. (p. 2, 3.)

"I have to thank the Bedford's and the Lauderdale's, (says Mr. Burke) for having so faithfully and so fully acquitted towards me whatever arrear of debt was left undischarged by the *PRIESTLEY's and the PAINE's*."—

—"The *PORTER's and the POLWHELE's*, (says the doctor) with the whole hue and cry of anti-jacobinical and anti-Christian reviewers, long since run me down and run over me. And sir, they would have told you, had you consulted their labours, that as far as the abuse of the tongue and the pen could go, *they had anticipated your labours*."—(p. 3.)

"At every step of my progress in life, (says Mr. Burke) (for in every step I was traversed and *opposed*) and at every *turnpike* I met, I was obliged to shew my passport."

—(p. 398.)—I am alone, I have none to *meet my enemies in the gate*."—(p. 417.)

nation of what is meant by it. He finds an apology however, for this omission; it is a cu-

The doctor has been it seems, exposed to similar hostility.

“*At every step I have made in those divine parts of the Gospel, I have met with opposition from men who do not believe it, and from men who never can believe it.*”— (p. 21.) And he views the opposition he thus met with at *every turnpike*, in exactly the same *metaphoric light*.

“I consider this however, (says he) but as a *toll* which all the faithful labourers in the Gospel are *obliged to pay*, when they *speak with their enemies in the gate.*” (p. 2.)

“Loose *libels*, (says the philosopher of Beaconsfield) ought to be passed by in *silence* and *contempt*. By me they have been so always. I knew that as long as I remained in public, I should *live down the calumnies* of malice, and the judgments of ignorance.” (p. 379.)

The philosopher has the good fortune to have this doctrine confirmed by the preacher.

“*Libels*, (says he) of every kind, in my esteem, are best treated by *silence*. And libels which come from anonymous authors, certainly can have no higher pretensions, than to *contempt*. The *general tenor of a man's life*, is the truest refutation of all such *calumny*.” (p. 4.)

“*Had his grace condescended to inquire*, (says the correspondent of the Noble Duke) *concerning the person* whom he has not thought it below him to reproach, he might have found that in the whole course of my life, I have never &c. (p. 298.)

“Allow me, sir, (says my evangelical correspondent) to add, *had you condescended to have made inquiry concerning the person*, whose *character* and writings you *make so free* with, before that you sent forth into the world your judg-

rious one, but as it was probably the best he could offer, it becomes matter of courtesy to

ment and sentence for execution upon both; you might have found cause to have stopped the warrant."

"It is not my way, (says Mr. Burke) to refuse *a full and heaped measure* of justice to the aids which I receive." (p. 387.)

"They poured, (says the vicar) *a full heaped measure* of censure upon me." (p. 3.)

"When I say I have not received more than I deserve, (says the celebrated politician) *is this the language I hold to majesty? No, far, very far from it.* (p. 381.)

"Is this appeal to an honourable reputation, (says the popular preacher) *foreign to the modesty becoming me?* Is it in any degree departing from my own principles of the fallen state of man? *Far, very far from it.* (p. 5.)

"I challenge the Duke of Bedford as a juror, (says the orator) to pass upon the value of my services." (p. 379.)

Not so the doctor. He does not "decline the jurisdiction" of his censor. "The jurors of my conduct, (says he) he himself shall impanel." (p. 4.)

"In private life, (says Mr. Burke) I have not at all the honour of acquaintance with the noble duke. *But I ought to presume—and it costs me nothing to do so*—that he abundantly deserves the esteem and love of all who live with him. (p. 406.)—If I should happen to trespass a little, which I trust I shall not, let it always be supposed that a *confusion of characters* may produce mistakes, that in the *masquerades* of the grand carnival of our age, whimsical adventures happen. Odd things are said, and pass off." (p. 379.)

"*I ought to take for granted,* (says the doctor) for it certainly *puts me to no expence so to do*, that you really are what you profess to be, a man learned in the law.

accept it. “ *I shall not stay to inquire* (says he) *at this time, in what, according to the*

For such I suppose the title of Barrister is intended to imply. But yet methinks a Barrister unacquainted with the laws of the land, is somewhat novel. And yet I correct myself, it is *an age of masquerade*; few among the *pantomimical characters* around us *are in reality* what they appear to be.” (p. 29.)

The class of writers to which the doctor belongs, must be *inconsistent with themselves*, to be *consistent with each other*. This sufficiently reconciles his first assertion, “that he takes it for granted that the Barrister is learned in the law,” with the contradiction which immediately follows, that he thinks him “unacquainted with the laws of the land.” Here is certainly an accidental want of coincidence. But, as Burke truly says of this whimsical age—“*Odd things are said, and pass off.*”

Besides the doctor makes another concession,—which like the former, *puts him to no expence*, as he borrows it from the same writer—the concession of *fallibility*.

“If I happened, (says Mr. Burke) to be *now and then in the wrong (as who is not)* like all other men, &c.” (p. 378.)

“*Though now and then*, (says the doctor) *no doubt in the wrong, (for who is there that is not)* &c. (p. 47.)

It is something to have obtained from an *evangelical* antagonist a confession that he may be *now and then in the wrong*. Who knows but that in the end such persons may be brought to believe that others may be in the right. It would, to be sure, be a strange innovation on their present creed. But who can say what a *revolution of opinion* the study of Mr. BURKE may produce. He is a most convincing and powerful writer. He once *reformed the JACOBIANS*,

analogy of scripture, this NEW BIRTH consists." But the doctor is one of those powerful adversaries that contends as successfully without the aid of reason or argument, as if he were ever so well seconded. The most acute logician could not manage matters more triumphantly. "Let this new birth (says he) *be what it may*, the very admission of the thing itself, THROWS TO THE GROUND all your high-flown notions of the competency of *morality*, to the full correction of the minds and manners of the people †." What *close* and *cogent* reasoning is here!! Talk of LOCKE and LEIBNITZ, why the VICAR OF CHARLES beats them hollow!!

Since this renowned champion of methodism *will not stay to inquire* in what this NEW BIRTH consists, I will devote a page or two to supply the omission occasioned by his *want of leisure*. I do this the more readily because the delusive jargon that is abroad on this subject gives it a

and it is not impossible that he may one-day *enlighten the SAINTS*. He has given *sight to the blind* in the one instance, let us hope that he may do it in the other.

strong claim on the attention of considerate and reflective minds.

Let us examine this doctrine as it comes from the pulpit of the modern expositors. The *Reverend Mr. Cooper* gives us the following as the *defective* advice of one who entertains *false conceptions* on this subject.—“ Let the *evil propensities* be weakened and *subdued*. Let the *inherent good dispositions* be strengthened and encouraged. Let the noxious weeds, the tares and thorns be cleared away, and the seeds of virtue, *thus freed from every impediment which can obstruct their growth*, will naturally vegetate and thrive.” And he then asks—“ But is this a remedy adapted to the disease * ? ” —If it is not, I would ask, what is? This we are not told. But we are told that this remedy “ does not reach the extent of the disorder ; the corruption is total, total must be the change.” Now any one would suppose, that if all *evil propensities* were sub-

* Sermons chiefly designed to elucidate some of the leading doctrines of the Gospel. By the Rev. Edward Cooper, Rector of Hamstall Ridware, in the County of Stafford, Chaplain of the Right Hon. the Earl of Courtown, &c.

dued, the change for the better would be as *total* as it is ever likely to be in any man or woman on this side the grave. But the reverend doctrinist proceeds thus :—“ If *that which is born of the flesh, be flesh*, must not every child of Adam BE BORN AGAIN, OR FOR EVER EXCLUDED FROM THE MANSIONS OF THE BLESSED ? Is not this the express assertion of our Lord ? Except a man be *born again*, he cannot see the kingdom of God.—”

Thus it is that these teachers quote half-texts, and garble the scriptures for the sake of supporting their own particular doctrines. All the disciples of the *new birth*, as it is called, quote this half-text, and their ignorant hearers rest content with repeating it one after another, without once adverting to its genuine meaning, which is as plain and intelligible as any moral truth contained in the Gospel. Our Saviour himself, explains his meaning explicitly. When,—taking his words in their *literal* sense,—NICODEMUS proceeds to inquire how a man can be born again when he is old ? and, whether he can enter a *second* time into his mother’s womb and

be born? Jesus answered him thus—"Verily, I say unto you, unless a man be born of *water* and of *the spirit*, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."—The true sense of which is obviously this—Except a man be initiated into my religion by *baptism*, (which at that time was always preceded by a confession of faith) and unless he manifest his sincere reception of it, by leading that upright and *spiritual* life which it enjoins, *he cannot enter the kingdom of Heaven*, or be a partaker of that happiness which it belongs to me to confer on those who believe in my name and keep my sayings.—

But this doctrine of the new birth, in the hands of these evangelical methodists, is calculated to sink the weak but well-meaning mind to the depths of despair; and to perplex the feelings and alarm the fears of their hearers, till they are driven, as too many of them are, from the MEETING, to the MAD-HOUSE. One of the evangelical brethren, in a sermon on this subject, thus addresses one whom he supposes to be inquiring of him respecting the nature and necessity of a new birth.

“Do you say, ‘Nay, but I do no harm to any man: I am honest and just in all my dealings: I do not curse, or take the Lord’s name in vain: I do not prophane the Lord’s day: I am no drunkard: I do not slander my neighbour, nor live in wilful sin.’ If this be so, it were much to be wished that all men went as far as you do. But you *must go farther yet, or you cannot be saved*: STILL YOU MUST BE BORN AGAIN. Do you add, ‘I do go farther yet; for I *not only do no harm, but do all the good I can.*’ I doubt that fact; I fear you have had a thousand opportunities of doing good, which you have suffered to pass by unimproved, and for which therefore you are accountable to God. But *if you had improved them all, if you really had done all the good you possibly could to all men, yet this does not at all alter the case*: STILL YOU MUST BE BORN AGAIN. Without this, nothing will do any good to your poor, sinful, polluted soul. ‘Nay, but I constantly attend all the ordinances of God: I keep to my church and sacrament.’ It is well you do. But *all this will not keep you from hell*, EXCEPT YOU BE

BORN AGAIN. Go to church twice a day, go to the Lord's table every week, say ever so many prayers in private, read ever so many good books, **YOU STILL MUST BE BORN AGAIN:** *none of these things will stand in the place of the new birth: no nor any thing under heaven*.*"

We here see what the simple truths of Christianity, become in the mouth of a fanatic.

In another part of this discourse, we have the following passage.—“ What danger, say they, can a *woman* be in, that is so *harmless* and so *virtuous*? What fear is there that so *honest a man*, one of so *strict morality*, should miss of Heaven? Especially if *over and above all this*, they constantly attend on church and sacrament. *One of these* will ask, with all assurance, ‘ What, shall I not do as well as my neighbours?’ Yes, as well as your **UNHOLY** neighbours; as well as your neighbours *that die in* their sins. For you will **ALL DROP INTO THE PIT TOGETHER, INTO THE NETHER-**

* “ The New Birth, a Sermon on John iii. 7. Printed by G. Paramore, and sold at the Chapel, City Road, and at the Methodist Preaching-Houses in Town and Country. 1794.”

MOST HELL. YOU WILL ALL LIE TOGETHER IN THE LAKE OF FIRE, *the lake of fire burning with brimstone.*”

Here those who practise virtue, and the strictest moral duties of the gospel of God, are placed on the same level with the *unholy*; and this presumptuous enthusiast consigns both to eternal torment with as little concern, and allots them their portion of fire and brimstone, with as much confidence, as if the empire of THE LAKE were exclusively his own.

But is it not dreadful that the gospel of a wise, and just, and beneficent Creator should be thus perverted and prophaned? Is it not deplorable that such ignorant impostors should daily multiply their deluded victims, and set the scriptures and common sense at defiance?!!

The true meaning of being “born again,” in the sense in which our Saviour uses the phrase, implies nothing more or less in plain terms, than this:—to repent; to lead for the future a religious life, instead of a life of disobedience; to believe the holy scriptures, and to pray for grace and assistance, to persevere

in our obedience to the end. All this ~~any~~ man of common sense, might explain in a few words. But these foolish fanatics, instead of enforcing the necessity of a moral and holy life, teach their deluded hearers that virtue and morality is just worth nothing; but that the "new birth," which they preach up as a something quite distinct from it, is *all in all*. So that they go on in their sin waiting for a "new birth," or a miraculous and sudden conversion, which they relate to happen in the most absurd cases and situations. There is an account, amongst many others equally absurd, of an old washerwoman having a *new birth*, while busy at the tub. The following account of it, is extracted from the Methodist Magazine for 1798, p. 273.—"The *LORD* ASTONISHED *Sarah Roberts* with his mercy, by setting her at liberty, while employed in the necessary business of washing for her family. For even while her hands were engaged in the world, her heart was given unto the Lord. She now found all the ways of religion to be ways of pleasantness, and all its paths peace. She received a clear witness that God, for

Christ's sake, had *blotted out all her sins*, and *received her into his family*."

Could the scoffer or the infidel more effectually laugh at religion, than by forging such a ridiculous "Tale of a Tub" as these methodistic mountebanks have here recorded, as a miraculous manifestation of mercy. A washerwoman has *all her sins blotted out*, in the twinkling of an eye, and while reeking with suds, is received in the family "of the Redeemer's kingdom!!!"

Surely this is a most abominable profanation of all that is serious!—a most monstrous burlesque of all that is sacred! Yet such, according to the evangelists of methodism, is the new birth!!!

The air of positive infallibility with which these new gospel Oracles deliver their *word*, is not the least prominent feature of their character. The most solemn injunctions, the most sacred commands of God and his gospel, seem to be treated with no respect or reverence, whenever they stand in the way of *their* doctrine. They do not even deign to refer to them, but

pass by their authority, with^r apparently as much indifference as though they did not exist. In order that I may be better understood, and that I may not be considered as dealing in general assertion, I will thus exemplify it.

The leading design of John the Baptist, the immediate herald of the Messiah, was evidently this:—To prepare the minds of men for the reception of that pure system of moral truth which the Saviour, by divine authority, was speedily to inculcate, and of those sublime doctrines of a resurrection and a future judgment which, as powerful motives to the practice of holiness, he was soon to reveal.—

“And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of REPENTANCE FOR the remission of sins.—”

Here *repentance* is made,—what in the language of legal accuracy is termed—a *condition precedent*; that is, it must be *previously* manifested, in order to procure the remission of sins; it is made the express condition, upon

the performance of which the promised pardon is granted.—I wish the reader to remark this, as it is presently to be compared with the doctrine opposed to it.

When the Baptist thus exhorted his hearers to amendment of life, he seems to have soared above their comprehension. The change of a CEREMONIAL for a MORAL dispensation, was a change which they did not conceive to be an improvement at all intelligible. They had been always accustomed to consider themselves as already in such complete possession of all that was essential in religious truth; and their *faith* in the efficacy of their own rites, and creeds, and ceremonies, and their whole train of SUBSTITUTIONS for MORAL DUTY, was so entire, and in their opinion was such a *saving faith*, that they could not at all interpret any language that seemed to dispute their value, or deny their importance.

“ And the people asked him, saying, *What shall we do, then?* ”

The prophet's reply, and the spiritual instruction which it contained, is as simple as it is rational, and as impressive as it is simple.

He did not lay before them any doctrinal points of faith.—He did not tender any mysterious creed for their subscription—No.

“He answereth and saith unto them, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none ; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise.”

And we cannot fail to remark, that each separate class of inquirers were enjoined to avoid those peculiar errors, not of *faith*, but of PRACTICE, to which they were respectively most exposed, and most addicted.

“Then came also PUBLICANS to be baptized, and said unto him, Master, *what shall we do ?*”

“And he said unto *them*, Exact no more than that which is appointed you.”

“And the SOLDIERS likewise demanded of him, saying, *And what shall we do ?* And he said unto *them*, Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely ; and be content with your wages.”

Thus it was that this MORAL preacher explained and enforced the duty of repentance, and thus it was that he prepared the way for

that greatest and best of teachers, who, in language the most awful, thus confirmed the exhortation of the prophet;—"I tell you, EXCEPT ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."

Repentance is here, in language equally solemn and equally plain, made the *CONDITION precedent* of salvation;—for *except* repentance is manifested in the moral reformation of the heart and life, it is declared that their salvation was precluded, and they would assuredly perish.

Now let us turn our attention to one of the popular leaders, and learn the evangelical doctrine as laid before the multitude to be received as the *truth*. What sums up and completes his finished view of the Gospel, is the super-addition, we are told, of this striking peculiarity, that

"—It is *ALTOGETHER UNCONDITIONAL* on the *part of God*, and requires no previous *QUALIFICATION OR WORTH on the part of man*. Indeed," (it is added) "the highly favoured objects of such rich bounty as is shewn in the gospel, being all along considered as *without*

*strength, and dead in trespasses and sins, and having the sentence of death in themselves, that they should not trust in themselves, but in him who raiseth the dead, it would be a contradiction in terms to suppose that characters so described should be capable of doing any thing to help, or bringing any thing to recommend them, to the divine favour**"—

All that this worthy doctor proves by the introduction of a passage from an epistle of Paul, is that he does not understand the meaning of it. These Calvinistic evangelists so split and divide, and so mis-interpret and mis-apply, the epistles penned by the great apostle of the Gentiles, that they make him strive *against* the gospel, as effectually as he ever struggled *for* it. He becomes in the hands of these sectaries, an instrument of destroying the moral fabric of that religion which he once laboured so strenuously and so successfully to establish.

The conclusion that follows the premises, "that no previous qualification or worth on the

* Dr. Hawker's "Prop against all Despair," preface, p. 5.

part of man is necessary, is most clearly, this : —that this life is not a state of preparation for another ; since all *previous qualification* or *worth* is declared to be unnecessary as a ground of acceptance hereafter. Thus what has ever been considered by all rational Christians, as the true view of the Gospel, is here discarded, and all the duties which the necessity of such a preparation render compulsory, fall to the ground.—A libertine, therefore, gets rid of the gospel thus far.

But still such a man, with some principles of conscience still lingering on his mind, might be disposed to believe that he ought to make some exertion towards improving his principles, reforming his habits, and restraining his passions. But the logic of the new evangelists will convince him that it is a contradiction in terms even to SUPPOSE himself CAPABLE OF DOING ANY THING to help, or BRINGING ANY THING to RECOMMEND HIMSELF TO THE DIVINE FAVOUR. Thus his conscience is set completely at rest on that score, and being assured that all attempts to reform himself is fruitless—that it is about

as profitable an employment, as cyphering on the sand—he easily gives credit to a doctrine so favourable to the indulgence of propensities which he has no desire to conquer, and therefore, like a true philosopher, takes no unnecessary pains.

But after all this, there may be moments when gleams of moral light will pass over his mind, and he may be induced to believe that religion could never be revealed without containing such evidences of its truth and of the divine mission of its founder, as upon examination would demand and even extort, his *faith* in it, and pursuing this train of reflection, it might lead him to this inference—that he was placed here in a state of trial, and that according as his deeds were good and evil in this life, so in exact proportion would be his reward or punishment in the life to come.—Having, I say, a serious *faith* in this great doctrine, he would collect from it the duty and the necessity of REPENTANCE, and might be alarmed, by the force of a natural and sincere conviction at the danger of deferring his endeavours to regain

that favour promised to the returning prodigal, and that pardon, extended to every penitent offender.

The conscience of the libertine would be relieved from a considerable source of disquietude and remorse, if his evangelical tutor could dismiss from him the conviction that faith and repentance—which consist in abstaining from all forbidden indulgences, that these—were not the conditions of obtaining salvation, for if once convinced of that, he might then continue to enjoy the one without forfeiting his hopes of the other.—If then, he would become a willing convert to this conviction,—if this doctrine would be of all others the most congenial to his wishes, and the most consolatory to his fears, the new evangelical preacher has a gospel exactly suited to his case.

—“EVEN REPENTANCE and FAITH, (says Dr. Hawker) those most essential qualifications of the mind, for the participation and enjoyment of the blessings of the gospel, (and which all real disciples of the Lord Jesus cannot but possess) are *never* SUPPOSED as a CON-

DITION *which the SINNER performs to entitle him to mercy*, but merely as evidences that he is brought and has obtained mercy. *They* CANNOT *be the CONDITIONS of obtaining salvation* *''—.

The former authorities on this subject, I had quoted from the gospel according to St. Luke; that gospel most positively and most solemnly declares the *repentance* of sinners to be the *condition* on which, *alone*, salvation can be obtained. But the doctors of the new divinity DENY THIS, they tell us distinctly IT CANNOT BE.—For the future, the gospel according to CALVIN, must be received as the truth.—Sinners will certainly prefer it as the more comfortable of the two, beyond all comparison.—To them, the OLD EVANGELISTS offer nothing that can at all come into competition with the *precious faith* instilled into them by their NEW RIVALS.

What is *faith*? Is it not a conviction produced in the mind by adequate testimony? Let us then put this plain question,—Is the

* Dr. Hawker's "Prop, &c." preface, p. 6.

concurrent testimony of the four evangelists who have faithfully recorded the doctrines of our Saviour, and the miracles by which he attested his divine mission—is this sufficient to produce in any rational mind a correspondent faith in the gospel? I apprehend that none but an infidel will answer, No.—What then must the multitude think, if they think at all, when they find so popular a preacher as Dr. Hawker—who must be supposed to have devoted the leisure of a long life in searching the scriptures—put so striking and so impressive a declaration as the following, deliberately upon record:—“I could as easily create a world, as create either FAITH or REPENTANCE in my own heart *.” Surely this is a most monstrous confession.—What! is not the Christian religion a REVEALED religion, and have we not the most miraculous attestation of its truth?—Is then the evidence of Him who died “that he might BEAR WITNESS to the truth,” is his evidence so feeble and inconclusive, that a veteran preacher of the gospel shall pub-

* Dr. Hawker's “Prop, &c.”

licly affirm that he could as easily create a world, as produce in himself the *faith* it demands, or practice the *repentance* it requires.

How can Dr. Hawker,—how can any man—express himself so rashly on a subject of such importance?! How can any preacher, that has once deliberately penned such a confession, how can he ever reprobate an atheist, or rebuke the unbeliever?!—If the divine testimony of revelation is of itself, after full investigation, insufficient to produce conviction in his own mind, how can he ever object to the sceptic that he is guilty of *wilful* disbelief?—How, after this, can he ever urge the deist to embrace the gospel, as containing such adequate proof of its authenticity, as will justify his faith in it?! How can this evangelical preacher declaim on the necessity of seriously searching into the truth of revelation, for the purpose either of producing or confirming our belief of it, when he has already pronounced it to be just as possible to arrive at conviction as to create a world?!!!

What becomes all this time of the evidences of Christianity? Are the miracles to be de-

nied, or is their force deemed inconclusive? Is all the proof, internal and external, coincident and collateral, which the gospel carries with it, to be rejected as inadequate? Is then the life, and death, and resurrection of the Saviour not authentic? Is the veracity of the apostles doubtful, or does their testimony go for nothing?

Really these ministers of the new church are a most extraordinary class of teachers!!!

But this Calvinistic evangelist tells us, by way of accounting for the utter impossibility of producing in himself either faith or repentance, that—"both are of divine origin, and like the light, and the rain, and the dew of heaven, which tarrieth not for man, neither waiteth for the sons of men, are from above, and come down from the Father of light, from whom alone cometh every good and perfect gift *."

Here the reverend divine runs into the old error of his sect, that of quoting a text of scripture which has no relation whatever to

* "Prop to Despair," preface, p. 6.

the doctrine which he pretends to establish by it. That from the Father of light cometh every good and perfect gift, we well know; but we know equally well, that the best and most perfect gift is that REASON which he has bestowed upon us for the purpose of distinguishing truth from falsehood, and right from wrong; and to that reason, thus imparted to us his gospel is so fully manifested, and its truth so abundantly revealed, that the man who deems it insufficient to create *faith* in his mind, “neither would he believe though one rose from the dead.”

It is a most remarkable circumstance, by the way, that this new order of evangelists should be perpetually exhorting the multitude to have *faith* in *their* doctrines, which are confessedly full of mystery, while they at the same time represent it to be just as impossible for a man to create a world, as to beget a faith in the *gospel of God*, in which there is nothing unintelligible, and which all who read may understand. According to them it requires a miracle, to enable us to have faith in the religion of Christ which has the fullest

and most complete evidence, and yet we are to have faith, on pain of damnation, in the doctrines of Calvin which have no evidence at all!!!

Weak and timid minds are overawed by the authoritative tone in which these teachers of *humility* deliver themselves. Thus the reverend doctor modestly assures us, that this *his* view of the gospel is *certainly* THE ONLY *true view of it*; and when he lays down the doctrine immediately afterwards, which I formerly remarked upon, that “the rich tide of mercy flows continually without ebbing, that it is not enough to say, that it washes on the shore of the undeserving, but it reaches to the ground of the ill-deserving, not barely to those who have done *nothing* to merit *mercy*, but to those who have done *every thing* to merit *punishment*. That it rises above high-water mark, overflows *all bounds*, and overtops the *tallest mountains* of corruption.”—He does not fail to subjoin that “this is *undoubtedly* the state of the case with reference to the gospel.”

Dr. Hawker then, it seems, cannot be mistaken. He that cannot mistake, is infallible.

Dr. Hawker, therefore, is infallible.—This reasoning is conclusive.

The view which this new spiritual Regency take of a subject, they forthwith declare to be the view which the *gospel* takes of it. Thus “the *gospel*, (says the unerring doctor) considers *all men*, universally speaking, as lost, and all equally INCAPABLE of putting forth *an* HELPING HAND toward the attainment of their own salvation *.” But surely it would be but fair in these instances, to forewarn us, that it is the CALVINISTIC, not the CHRISTIAN gospel that thus considers mankind. That no such view of human nature is manifested in the latter, must be obvious to every man that ever read attentively the TEN COMMANDMENTS.

According to that gospel which hath hitherto been the pillar of the Christian world, we are taught that whosoever endeavours to the best of his ability to reform his manners and amend his life, will find pardon and acceptance. That “when the wicked man turneth away from the wickedness which he hath committed,

* “Prop, &c.” preface, p. 1.

and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive.” This gracious declaration the old moral divines of our church, have placed in the front of its liturgy. When the doctor himself announces this from the desk, as he must do, at the very commencement of the service, does it never strike him as utterly repugnant to the doctrine he delivers from the pulpit. Would it not be a sort of inhuman or tyrannic mockery to assure a poor *helpless* being, that if he walked a certain distance he should be restored to health, when we knew him to be *utterly incapable* of putting one leg before the other. The scriptural promise above quoted, in order to square with the doctor’s creed, should be altered thus,—“When the wicked man *hath been turned* away from the wickedness which he hath committed, and that *is done for him* which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive.” As it stands at present, it denies, as plainly as language can deny, that *utter inability* in every bad man to *put forth a helping hand* towards his own reformation, for which

the apostles of the new church so strenuously contend.

That we too often want the *will* to do good, and abstain from evil, is unquestionable. But that we want the *power* to do so, if we were sincerely disposed to exert it, is utterly false. The scripture denies the doctrine, and experience refutes it.

“ And herein I give my advice”—(I am quoting St. Paul)—“ for this is expedient for you, *who have begun* before not only *to do*, but also *to forward* a year ago.

“ Now therefore *perform the doing of it*; that as there was a readiness *to will*, so there may be a *performance also*, out of that which ye have.

“ For if there be first *a willing mind*, it is accepted *according to that a man hath*, and not *according to that he hath not*.”

The doctor and his evangelical brethren, would be much better employed in exhorting their hearers and readers to overcome their evil habits, and to refrain from bad company and bad examples, than to furnish them with

an apology for their vices by assuring them they were born corrupt, and to check and dis-spirit their return to virtue, by persuading them that it is wholly out of their own power to procure or prepare themselves for a better state hereafter, or to put forth a helping hand to obtain the reward promised only to those that *overcome*.

The mischievous tendency of such doctrines is obvious. Every unprejudiced and thinking mind must revolt from them. To multiply arguments to the bigot is useless; he is reason-proof. You might as well attempt 'to make a blind man see by lighting up more candles.'

The teachers in the great school of CHRISTIAN MORALITY, were ever of opinion that the foundation of morals cannot be laid too soon, That the education of children should begin in the nursery, and that no corrupt example should be suffered to mislead them. They warned the parent of the flexible and imitative disposition of the infant mind, and the imperceptible progress of vicious habit;—they reminded him of the eternal importance of early training his offspring to virtue, and to

an obedience to the precepts of that religion which bids us *abstain from all appearance of evil*. But it seems that this mode of teaching is of all others the most erroneous. Vice and wickedness, it now appears, are the only true preparatives of salvation. Instead, therefore, of praying to be “delivered from evil,” the rising generation must adopt a form of prayer, directly the reverse; their petition must be that they may commit such a due portion of crimes as may give them an interest in the saving truths of the gospel. “For so very peculiarly directed to the SINNER, and to HIM ONLY—(says the evangelical preacher)—is the blessed gospel of the Lord Jesus, that UNLESS YOU ARE A SINNER, YOU ARE NOT INTERESTED IN ITS SAVING TRUTHS *.”

I really thought the good doctor had gone *quite far enough*, when he affirmed that our future salvation is so completely without terms and conditions that “*every idea of moral goodness as a qualification for obtaining it is done away †.*” But here we find that *moral evil* is

* Dr. Hawker’s “Prop against all Despair,” p. 13.

† Ibid p. 17.

itself indispensable to our future acceptance, and thus sin is made necessary to salvation.

To what lengths will the ANTI-MORALISTS go next !!!

Does not this divine know that the *first* step into guilt, is most to be dreaded ;—that the *first* compliance with the impulse of immoral desire, is most to be feared. And this, because when virtue is in one instance overcome, it is the fatal prelude to a victory that may hereafter be complete. The Wise Man knew this, when he raised so earnestly, his warning voice to put the youthful and uncorrupted on their guard.—“ Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men ; avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it and pass away *.” He knew that if once seduced aside, the chance would be greatly against their returning ; he feared that if they once entered the path of the wicked, they would be enticed to go on with them to the end of the journey.

But this moral instructor was not brought

* Prov. v. 14--15.

up at the feet of the new GAMALIELS; he was therefore not aware that it was necessary to inoculate the infant-mind with vice, in order to qualify him to become a successful candidate for immortality. It was reserved for these days of *new discovery* to announce to mankind, that unless they are SINNERS, they are excluded from the promised blessings of the gospel.

I expatiated at some length, in my last, on the pernicious consequences which result from the positions laid down by Dr. Hawker, and while commenting upon them, I endeavoured to place those consequences in a strong and striking light. I there stated distinctly the language which was virtually held forth to the seducer, the robber, and to criminals of every cast. The different writers, who have come forward as they say, to answer,—but who in fact, have done every thing but *answer*,—the charges brought against those doctrines, have not shewn, nor attempted to shew, that they do not lead to the conclusions deduced from them. Instead of doing this, which they would willingly enough have done, but that they were not able, they quote the passage itself apart

from the doctrines and positions to which it referred, and then proceed, as is usual with them, to raise the hue and cry against the writer, as one who “deems the blood of the covenant an unholy thing.” But it is not by declamation and invective, that what I have stated to be the result of their tenets, is to be got rid of. I can assure these gentlemen, that I regard, with a reverence as pure and awful as can enter into the human mind, that blood which was shed upon the cross; but I cannot regard, without a mixture of astonishment and horror, the dreadfully delusive doctrine which they ground upon it; a doctrine which our Saviour himself never taught, and which the whole gospel throughout distinctly and utterly disavows.

But as this subject is important, I will go over the ground again, and I call upon those who may hereafter come forward to answer me, distinctly to shew, FIRST, that it is not repentance and amendment of life, to which the promise of pardon is made, but that the *BLOOD of Christ* CLEANSETH FROM ALL SIN; and NEXT, that this doctrine is au-

thorized by OUR SAVIOUR, and that it is taught in HIS GOSPEL. This I call upon them to do—how they will acquit themselves of the task, remains to be seen. Let them not attempt to escape it by quoting a few disconnected phrases in the epistles, but let them adhere solely and steadfastly to that GOSPEL, of which they affect to be the exclusive preachers ; and let them prove explicitly from the EVANGELISTS, that doctrine which as EVANGELICAL *ministers* they deliver as the cornerstone of their creed,

In the mean time, I must be permitted to remark, that Dr. Hawker's language and his doctrine—which the whole tribe so zealously adopt and defend—appear to hold forth a most unwarranted encouragement to criminals, and to lay down as the most prevailing plea for pardon, that which seems of all others the most calculated to exclude the hope of it.

“ You will not (says he) I hope after what hath been advanced, continue to say that your sins are *too great*, or *too many* to be pardoned, for *the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from ALL sin*. David so far thought the *multitude*,

or the *malignity* of his transgressions, from being an argument against suing for mercy, that he makes it the very foundation of pleading with God. ‘For thy names sake, O God, be merciful unto my sin, for it is great*.’ This kind of arguing, were it made *among men*, would be considered strange indeed, for *we* use the very reverse. It is the common maxim to endeavour to extenuate offence, by pleading the never having done it before, and *the hope of never falling into it again*. But WITH GOD, *the plea differs*; the greatness of our sin pleads with the greatness of divine mercy.—Deep calleth unto deep †”

Here not a word is said of future obedience as the ground of the forgiveness of past transgressions!! Surely if it be true that it is *the greatness of our sin*, and not THE SINCERITY OF OUR REPENTANCE, that pleads with the divine mercy, I know of no stronger inducement that can be held forth to the multitude

* Is there any thing in these words of the Psalmist, that can at all justify the most extraordinary inference it is brought to support,—that he built his plea for pardon on the foundation of his offences?

† Dr. Hawker’s “Prop against all Despair,” p. 25.

to multiply their offences. The degree of guilt it seems, makes no difference. “ This (says the doctor) becomes the universal remedy for GREAT sinners, as well as *little* sinners: the blood of Christ cleanseth from ALL sin *.”

Does our Saviour teach, in any one passage of his gospel, that there was any thing in his sufferings that would alter the nature of sin ; or that his blood—shed by the most obstinate and cruel bigots that ever disgraced the human character—would, when thus shed, exempt sinners from the punishment denounced against their crimes?—Did he, in any one instance, affirm that the *blood* thus spilt, was in itself effectual to the pardon of guilt, and would therefore annul that solemn declaration of God, that he would in a future life render to every man ACCORDING TO HIS WORKS?—Did he invite the miscreant multitude that flocked with frantic mockery to his cross—did he invite them to *wash their guilt away in the blood* they were shedding?—Did he direct them to *bathe in that crimson flood*, in order to

* Dr. Hawker’s “Prop against all Despair,” p. 12.

purify themselves from the blackness of their guilt,—a guilt so tremendous that the darkened earth trembled to its centre.—Did our Saviour after his resurrection, in any manner, or on any occasion, even allude to his *blood*, as cleansing the impure from their vices, or as clearing the guilty from their crimes?—Did he, when risen from the dead, give commission to his disciples to direct those, who had lived in open violation of his laws, to *a fountain filled with blood*? “No—“ He said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoveth Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead, the third day. And that REPENTANCE and *remission of sins*, should be *preached* in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem * ”

Thus we see *repentance* held forth as the sole condition on which pardon, or the *remission of sins*, can be obtained, and we have it left upon record as the *last*, as well as the *first*, revealed will of God, that this solemn truth should be preached to all nations.

What then are we to think of those, who

* Luke xxiv. 46—47.

instead of supporting this authoritative declaration of the Deity, lead the ignorant multitude either to mistake or to deny it, by prostituting the metaphoric language of the Jewish law, to the purpose of destroying the doctrines of revealed truth.

The language of our Saviour is always intelligible. "Let him that hath stolen, steal no more." Such was his moral admonition, and none to whom it was addressed, were perplexed about its meaning. When the young man inquired of him the way to eternal life, he did not direct him to the "*blood of sprinkling*;" a phrase so perpetually perverted in the mouths of the modern teachers,—but he answered, in language in which there was nothing vague or indefinite, "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." And when the youth presses his inquiry more closely, our Saviour proceeds to lay before him distinctly and one by one, those rules of MORAL DUTY to which it was indispensable he should conform.

"And he said unto him, which?"

"Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder,

thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not bear false witness,

“Honour thy father and thy mother, and thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.”

Our Saviour here proposes no other mode of salvation than the practice of piety, and the cultivation of habits of moral goodness. So likewise when “A certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, What shall I do to inherit eternal life.” He refers him to that *moral law*, which these modern evangelists hold in such utter contempt as to its concern with SALVATION.

“He said unto him, What is written in the *law*? How readest thou?”

“And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.

“And he said unto him, THOU HAST ANSWERED RIGHT; *this do*, and THOU SHALT LIVE.”

Now if instead of inculcating, as our Saviour expressly did, an habitual conformity to the precepts of Christianity, and an obedience to

the moral commandments of God, as contained in the gospel—if, I say, instead of inculcating this, as the ground on which men can alone rest their hope of salvation, the minds of the multitude are to be drawn aside from the contemplation of it, and made to rest in the metaphoric existence, and mystic efficacy of *a fountain of blood*, in which all the crimes and vices by which they have corrupted themselves and the community, are to be *washed away*: we shall in proportion as this doctrine is diffused, become a race of irrational visionaries,—while all the vigour of active goodness, and that PERSEVERANCE IN WELL-DOING, which is the soul of social virtue as well as of Christian duty, will gradually disappear from amongst us.

In a profligate metropolis like London, which abounds with perpetual temptations to vice, to which the lower classes are perpetually exposed, it is of peculiar importance that the MORAL PRINCIPLE should be cultivated and strengthened with increasing assiduity, and that the people should be taught by their religious Instructors, to view the Saviour in the true, just, and genuine light, in which the

scriptures represent him, as “the author of eternal salvation to all WHO OBEY HIM;” and not as a sacrifice by whose BLOOD the vengeance of God is appeased, and the DISOBEDIENT and SINFUL receive pardon and peace.—This latter is the tenet of CALVINISM, but it makes no part of the truth of CHRISTIANITY.

The personal ministry of our Saviour was at first confined to the JEWS. His authority was not extended to the GENTILES, until after his resurrection. It was *then*, and as the reward of his obedience, that he received the additional authority of extending the blessings of grace, and the offer of salvation, to the whole human race. He thus broke down the middle wall of separation between the Jewish and Gentile worlds, united both under the same covenant of salvation, and thus extended, to all mankind, the same terms and conditions of pardon and acceptance. In this sense it is, that he is said to have brought the Gentiles nigh *by his blood*; because by *his death*, they were united under one head, and made, ON CONDITION OF THEIR OBEDIENCE TO HIS GOSPEL, equally partakers of that salvation which is

its promised reward. The gospel is spoken of as a COVENANT, because its promises are made to depend on the fulfilment of those moral duties which the commandments contain, and because the death of Christ confirmed the truth of that covenant gospel which he revealed.

As all covenants were, under the Jewish dispensation, confirmed with the sprinkling of blood, so the death of Christ, by which he bare witness to the truth of his mission, is figuratively, and with allusion to that customary mode of confirmation, called the blood of the New Testament, and the *blood of sprinkling*.

As the death of Christ has for its object, the salvation of all *who obey him*, and as he “gave himself for us, that he might redeem us *from all iniquity*, and purify unto himself a people zealous of *good works* ;”—having died for this purpose, he is truly and justly said to have died for our SALVATION ; and it is with a figure of speech equally correct, that *thus* we are said to have redemption *through his blood*.

But that by *atoning* for their guilt, he be-

comes the author of *salvation* to those who *disobey* him, IS NOT TRUE.

That he came to redeem sinners from the *punishment* of all iniquity, by suffering it in their stead, IS NOT TRUE.

That he gave himself for those who were not zealous of *good works*, IS NOT TRUE.

That when he shall come to judge the earth, he will *impute* his righteousness to the wicked, IS NOT TRUE.

That *they* will benefit by his DEATH, who never benefited by his LIFE,—that those whom the promises of the gospel could never stimulate to holiness, will receive, through his *blood*, the reward promised only to the practice of virtue,—THIS IS NOT TRUE. And such doctrines, either in the metropolis or elsewhere, it is neither wise to teach, nor safe to learn.

With respect to the phrase of “the blood of Christ,”—a phrase sacred in the mouth of all rational Christians, and which ought never to be used on slight occasions,—these Fanatics repeat it with a frequency that is surfeiting, and associate it with a familiarity that is ludicrous. I will present the reader with one example

among an endless variety, from the **EVANGELICAL MAGAZINE** for December last. They were among the last words of a *reverend* Methodist, whose life, character, and behaviour, is duly recorded in that marvellous Chronicle of saints.

“—Sunday, the 24th. On a friend saying, ‘Take a drop of wine into your dear mouth;’ he replied, ‘It is a *dear* mouth, for it was purchased with *precious* BLOOD.’”

Surely such language comes much nearer to the irony of an infidel, than the piety of a *divine*!

When our Saviour sent forth his disciples, he commanded them to “go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel*.” This *exhor-*

* According to Dr. Hawker, Jesus is said to have addressed his disciples thus:—“Go forth unto *all the world*, and preach the gospel to *every creature*, but *as you go*, still seek for the lost sheep of the house of *Israel*.” But this representation,—with submission to the *divine*—is *erroneous*. It was not until *after* his resurrection, that his apostles were commissioned to “Go forth and teach all nations †;”—*before that event*, they were expressly interdicted from so doing. “These twelve (says St. Matthew) Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, *Go not* into the way of the *Gentiles*, and into *any city* of the Sa-

† Matt. xxviii. 19.

tation is thus singularly *paraphrased* by one whom Dr. Hawker denominates a *sweet writer*.

“—Tell them that I will be their shepherd still, though they despised my tears, and spilled my blood. Tell them that for their sakes I shed both. Let them know that I live, and *because I live*, my death shall not be their damnation, nor my murder an unpardonable sin, but tell them that *the blood of Jesus cleanses from ALL sin*, EVEN THAT SIN BY WHICH THAT BLOOD WAS SHED. And do you let them know that you have seen the prints of the nails upon my hands and

maritans *enter ye not* ; but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of ISRAEL †.”

The privileges of extending the blessing of the gospel to *all the heathen world* made a part of the *reward set before him*, by his heavenly Father from whom he was sent. Thus when the woman of *Canaan* intreated him to heal her deceased daughter, “He answered her not a word ;” and in reply to the request of his disciples respecting her, “He answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel ‡.”—This differs greatly from the doctor’s statement ; I point out his mistake, not only because it relates to a circumstance of material importance in itself, but on account of its connection with the extraordinary *paraphrase* of which it is made the subject.

† Matt. x. 5—6.

‡ Matt. xv. 23—24.

feet, and the wound of the spear in my side, and that *those marks of their cruelty, so far from giving me vindictive thoughts,* THAT EVERY WOUND THEY HAVE GIVEN ME, SPEAKS IN THEIR BEHALF, PLEADS WITH MY FATHER FOR THE REMISSION OF THEIR SINS, *and* ENABLES ME *to bestow it*; and by these sufferings, which they may be ready to think have exasperated me against them, BY THESE VERY WOUNDS, do persuade them to receive the salvation THEY *have procured*. Nay, if you meet that poor wretch that thrust the spear into my side, tell him that there is another and a better way of *coming at my heart*, even my heart's love, that they may look on him whom he hath pierced and mourn. I will cherish him in that very bosom he hath wounded, and he shall *find the blood he shed*, AN AMPLE ATONEMENT FOR THE SIN OF SHEDDING IT. And add moreover from me, that his refusal now will put me to more pain and displeasure, in rejecting again salvation through my blood, than when his spear first drew it forth."

Having thus quoted THIS MOST EXTRAOR-

DINARY PARAPHRASE, the doctor subjoins the following comment.—“ *How irresistible appears the argument, and how ought it, my brother, to operate upon you! Did the kind Jesus mean all this, AND MORE, when he commanded salvation to be first preached in Jerusalem, and will he refuse your cry for that salvation, when by his gracious command, it is thus brought here and offered to you? Were THE VERY MURDERERS OF OUR LORD made partakers of this great salvation, and shall it be withholden from you? How irreconcilable this to our ideas ** ”

If this *consolatory* kind of teaching can have any tendency to *prop the despair* of the reprobate and sinful, it can only be by destroying their belief in a judgment to come, when the secrets of all hearts shall be revealed, and men shall receive exactly in proportion to “ what they have done in the body, whether it be good or whether it be evil.”

If these very MURDERERS OF OUR LORD

* Vide Dr. Hawker’s ‘Prop against all Despair,’ p. 28—29, in which the above doctrine from this *sweet* writer, (Dr. Grosvenor) is quoted.

were made PARTAKERS OF THE GREAT SALVATION as the doctor affirms they were, what becomes of the parable which our Saviour himself delivered of the foolish Virgins, who having neglected to prepare themselves, with tears and importunity intreated admission, saying, "Lord, Lord, open to us;" and received for answer, "Verily, I say unto you, I KNOW YOU NOT."—It is utterly beyond the powers of my mind, to reconcile the doctrines of the *new* and of the old gospel with each other.

These doctors of the new divinity, seem never to consult the gospel. If they had done it in the instance before us, they would have found that the doctrine held forth in the most extraordinary paraphrase above quoted, is not only not warranted by our Saviour, but that a doctrine diametrically the reverse of it, is taught by him, and delivered too in a parable, apparently to preclude all possibility of misconception or mistake.

The parable itself is striking.—It was spoken before those very priests and scribes who afterwards became his murderers. After speak-

ing of those servants who had been before sent by the lord of the vineyard, and the obdurate and cruel manner in which they were rejected by the husbandmen, he then proceeds figuratively to represent his own mission, and prophetically to foretel that death which he should be constrained to suffer at the hands of those merciless persecutors that were then present before him.

“ Then said the Lord of the vineyard, what shall I do ? I will send my beloved SON ; it may be they will reverence *him* when they see him.

“ But when the husbandmen saw him, they reasoned among themselves, saying, this is the heir, come, let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours.

“ So they cast him out of the vineyard, and killed him. WHAT THEREFORE SHALL THE LORD OF THE VINEYARD DO UNTO THEM ?

“ He shall come, AND DESTROY THEM, and shall give the vineyard to others.

“ And when they heard this, they said GOD FORBID.

“ And he *beheld them*, and said, What is *this* then that is written, The stone which the

builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner?

“Whoever shall fall upon that stone *shall be broken*, but on whomsoever it shall fall, IT SHALL GRIND HIM TO POWDER.

“And the CHIEF PRIESTS and the SCRIBES, the same hour, sought to lay hands on him, and they feared the people, *for they perceived that he had spoken this parable AGAINST THEM* *.”—

The murderers of our Lord then—if the gospel is to be credited in preference to the modern evangelists—were very far from finding “the blood they shed an ample *atonement* for the sin of shedding it,”—it appears far wide of the truth “that every wound they gave, spoke in their behalf.”—How can any men in their senses deliver such shocking propositions as the truths of Christianity? and circulate them too, throughout the vast population of an extensive kingdom, as laying a foundation for that *faith* which is to fit us for eternity!!!

Is it wonderful that persons holding such

* Luke vi. 20.

sentiments and sending forth such doctrines, should consign to contempt and reprobation, all such *moral* teachers of the establishment, as urge their hearers to a steadfast perseverance in well doing, and who teach them to consider this life as a state of probation; as the allotted period in which each must strive by a faithful improvement of the talents committed to him, to merit the recompense of reward promised to every one “according as his work shall be?”

The term “blood,” and the phrase “blood of sprinkling,” is not only banded about by these sectaries with the most vulgar and irreverent familiarity, but it is even used by way of giving a zest to the fiercest deprecations of divine vengeance, against those who differ from them in religious opinions.

“O! might the *blood* of sprinkling cry
 “For those who spurn the sprinkled *blood*,
 Assert thy glorious Deity!
 Stretch out thy arm, thou TRIUNE GOD
 The UNITARIAN fiend expel,
 And chase his doctrine back to hell*.”

This forms part of a *hymn*!! Such are

* Large Hymn Book, 431.

the pious strains in which they offer up their prayer *against all persecution!!*—It is thus they warble forth the mild melodies of methodism in their Holy Tabernacles !!! Pious saints, and pure, it is thus they chaunt forth their *evangelical* petitions to the God of love and mercy !!!

This is but the symphony of this spiritual BAND—it is but the *prelude* with which they “awake their lute and harp.” But it discovers their spirit, and may serve to put us on our guard. THEY THEMSELVES “will awake *right early*.”

This strain of *doctrinal* poetry deserves a remark that ought not to escape us. If any man assume the name of a particular leader, he is presumed to adopt his religious opinions, and you are justified in imputing to him the whole of the doctrines, whatever they may be, that are held and taught by the teacher to whom he thus avowedly attaches himself. Thus, if any one choose to rank himself among the followers of CALVIN, he may be presumed to hold all the opinions which Calvin taught.—But this does

not apply with respect to any one, who attaching himself to no leader, professes to deny a particular doctrine, and to assume a denomination which shall designate his particular opinion. You cannot be justified in imputing any doctrine to such a man, but that distinct opinion which such denomination includes.—Thus if a man call himself a *Unitarian*, the disbelief of THREE GODS is all you are entitled to impute to him—the appellation imports no more than the rejection of the *Trinitarian hypothesis*.

AN UNITARIAN is he that believes in the *unity* of the divine nature ; or, in other words that there is but ONE God.

Our Saviour most explicitly declares that there is but *one God*, and that from that one and *only* true God, he was sent to be the messenger of salvation to mankind. His words are “This is life eternal, to know THEE, the *only* true God, and Jesus Christ whom *thou* hast sent *.”

Our Saviour then, most clearly believed,

* John vii. 7.

and taught all mankind to believe, in the *unity* of the divine nature.

To put up a prayer to the Deity, beseeching the exercise of his vengeance against “the *Unitarian* FIEND,” is to couch it in language in which the zealous bigot may glory, but at which the pious Christian will tremble.

When likewise we search the gospel for our instruction on this doctrine, and find that one of the scribes came and enquired of our Saviour, “Which is the *first commandment* OF ALL?”

“And Jesus answered him, *The first commandment* OF ALL is, Hear, O Israel, The Lord our God is ONE LORD.”

Having here found the belief of the *unity* of the divine nature, declared by Christ himself to be among the *first commandments* of God to man, who that reflects at all can join his voice with those who thus entreat the Almighty, in language equally revengeful and prophane, to

“CHASE HIS DOCTRINE BACK TO HELL.”

It is a most extraordinary circumstance,

and it is a circumstance which deserves a peculiar and marked attention, that this new sect at the same time that they arrogate to themselves the exclusive appellation of *Gospel Ministers*, and *Evangelical Preachers*, neither deduce their doctrines from the *gospel* nor from the *evangelists*, but 'passing' over both with silent indifference, they refer to the most abstruse passages of the letters of St. Paul, and to certain writers of the Old Testament.—The gospel, as recorded by the four evangelists, they scarcely deign to notice; you never find the parables, which our Saviour employed to illustrate *his* doctrines, even made the text of a sermon in which *theirs* are insisted upon. And this for the plainest of all reasons:—The moral truths inculcated in the instructive parables delivered by our Saviour himself, are so glaringly subversive of the whole of *their* system of *faith*, that they always keep them out of sight. Disconnected phrases are quoted from the epistles, while the plain language of our Saviour, and the doctrines of *his* gospel, are thrown completely into the

back-ground. With the cant of holiness upon their lips, they pretend to "preach CHRIST and him crucified," while all the time they are preaching PAUL and him *perverted*.

Could the APOSTLE of the GENTILES revisit this earth, he would be among the most forward to disavow the construction put upon the different passages in his epistles, and to denounce the doctrines they are quoted to support. He would be among the foremost to expose the pernicious consequences to which those doctrines lead; and would conjure the *Epistolic* preachers not to twist the controversial part of his letters to the support of a system which none can comprehend, but rather to enforce his moral precepts which all may practise, and his exhortations to obedience, which all may understand. HE would conjure them, not to mis-interpret his occasional expressions to support doctrines by which the foundation of Christianity is subverted, and the whole end and aim of his preaching frustrated and brought to nought.

Saint PAUL, educated as he was under

GAMALIEL, one of the most renowned professors of the Jewish law, and brought up among the strictest sect of the Pharisees, had been initiated into all the principles of that law, and had observed with the strictest formality, all the superstitious *works* and ceremonial observances which it enjoined, and like the rest of his brethren, he had been taught to value himself very highly upon this depth of legal knowledge, and this rigorous conformity to the Levitical system.

But after his conversion, this great apostle completely relinquished his prejudices in favor of the superstitious *works of the Jewish law*, and exerted all the energies of his zeal, and all the powers of his eloquence, to persuade mankind to govern their conduct by the plain rules of truth, justice, and charity, which the *moral law* of the gospel laid down. And as in his epistles to the Romans, and elsewhere, he had to contend with those who insisted with obstinate perseverance upon the indispensable necessity of circumcision, and the observance of the *works of the Mosaic law*, he is consequently led to

insist, that the necessity of these *works* is superseded by the introduction of the Christian *faith*, and that it is by a moral obedience to what that faith enjoins, that they can alone be saved, and not by *WORKS*; lest any man should boast of such *WORKS*, supposing them of greater importance than the fulfilment of their *moral duties*, and the weightier matters of the law;—a delusion which St. Paul knew to be very prevalent, and which he therefore laboured with great earnestness to remove.

The first JEWISH converts thought it essentially necessary that the GENTILES, before they could become partakers of the promises contained in the gospel, must first conform to the ceremonies of the Jewish dispensation, and submit themselves to the *law* of Moses. “And certain men,” we are told, “who came down from Judea, *taught the brethren*, and said, Except ye be *circumcised* after the manner of Moses, *ye cannot be saved* *.”—These taught that the gospel was

* Acts xv. 1.

insufficient, unless accompanied by the *works of the law*. These teachers St. PAUL strenuously combats, and it is in consequence of his resistance to this doctrine, that he is led so frequently and so forcibly to deny the efficacy of *works*, and the external observances of *the law*, in procuring the inheritance of the kingdom of heaven. “Christ,” says the great apostle, “is become the author of eternal salvation TO ALL THEM THAT OBEY HIM *.” And he holds forth no rational hope of salvation on any other grounds.

But when he declares to these Judaizing Christians that they are saved *without works* and “*without the law*,” does he ever once affirm that they are saved without good WORKS, or without an obedience to the *moral LAW*?—Is it not most extraordinary that these evangelical preachers, in consequence of the term “*works*” being thus used in the controversial epistles of St. Paul, should take occasion, as they most manifestly do, to undervalue *good works*, which include, in fact,

* Heb. v. 9.

all that the gospel either requires or commands?—Is it not most strange that following this spirit of perversion, they should teach the multitude that *righteousness is FILTHY RAGS*?—Is it not most unaccountable, that mis-representing the allusion of St. Paul to the *Mosaic law*, they should decry the efficacy and depress the influence of the *moral law*, without obedience to which neither peace here, nor heaven hereafter, is promised, or can be procured?—Yet it is in consequence of this most palpable, but most dangerous delusion, that incredible numbers,—perhaps the far greater part of the population of this kingdom,—are taught to set active virtue and practical morality infinitely below the merit of FAITH, and of faith too, in those very doctrines in which moral righteousness is thus slighted, and its influence destroyed*.

* A pamphlet has been published entitled “An appeal to the Legislature and to the Public, in answer to the ‘Hints, &c.’ By an Evangelical Preacher.” It is ascribed by the *Ecclectic Review* to Mr. COLLYER. As far as it respects *himself*, it is, like the rest of his *compilations*, full of nauseous pedantry, and sickly self-con-

I took occasion in the former part of these
 “ HINTS,” to mention the name of Mr.

ceit. As far as it respects the work to which it feigns to be an answer, it is nothing to the purpose. I should have left him “to the scandal of his own applause,” but that I deem it fit to give an example of the gross mis-representation to which he has had recourse in order to supply the want of argument on a subject with which his vanity led him to meddle, but which from his imbecility, he was unable to manage.

The reader may remember that in the first part of these Hints, I took occasion to contrast evangelical with moral preaching; the specimen of the latter was taken from Dr. BLAIR, of the former, from Mr. TOPLADY. After first distinctly stating the doctrine of REVELATION; after adding to this, the explicit language of St. PAUL, and after subjoining to both these sources of authority, the express information of our SAVIOUR himself; I then proceeded to quote, as openly and flatly contradictory to it, the following doctrine as delivered in the sermon of Mr. Toplady.

“ The RELIGION of JESUS CHRIST stands eminently distinguished, and essentially differenced from every other religion that was ever proposed to human reception, *by this remarkable peculiarity*, that look abroad in the world, and you will find that every religion *except ONE*, puts you upon *doing something* in order to recommend yourself. A MAHOMETAN expects to be saved by his *works*; a PAPIST looks to be justified by his *works*; a free-willer hopes for salvation by his *works, compliances, endeavours, and perseverance*; a PAGAN, if he believes that there is a future state, expects to be happy hereafter, by virtue of the supposed *good he does*, and of *the evil he leaves undone*; a MYSTIC has *the same hope*, and stands

PALEY—a name that I trust will never cease to be held in honor while virtue continues

upon the same foundation. It is only the **RELIGION** of **JESUS CHRIST** that *runs counter* to all the rest, by affirming that—‘we are saved and called with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to the Father’s own purpose and grace, *which was not sold to us on certain conditions to be fulfilled by ourselves*, but was given us in Christ before the world began.’”

I was sufficiently aware that the *last passage* was quoted from St. Paul, and I marked *in italics* the assertion foisted into it, which gives it a construction that wholly destroys the apostle’s meaning. Upon this passage, thus cited, and thus interpolated, *I made no comment*, though it would not have been difficult to shew that it gave no support whatever to the language that preceded it; but I confined myself *wholly* to the doctrine of Mr. Toplady, and in a comment extending to the length of four pages, I compared it closely and connectedly with the language of the gospel, which I proved to be diametrically the reverse of it.

Now in what manner does this “*evangelical preacher*,” as he calls himself, and who wishes to have it believed that he has written *an answer*—in what manner does he defend Mr. Toplady’s doctrine?—Does he reconcile it to the scriptures to which I had shewn it to be repugnant?—Has he even attempted to prove that it is not at variance with those declarations of our Saviour and those passages of his gospel which I had produced and opposed to it? No—he has done nothing of the kind; but wholly and entirely omitting the language and doctrine of Mr. Toplady,—to which my animadversions were applied,—he quotes the verse of St. Paul, as altered by Mr. Toplady, omitting the whole of the doctrine of Mr. Toplady himself, and

to be respected, or religion to be loved. His laborious exertions to instruct the ignorant—to convince the sceptical—to amend

exulting in a paltry artifice of which any man of sound integrity would have been ashamed, he writes thus:—"The Barrister has attacked Mr. Toplady so successfully that he has proved the apostle Paul *an infidel*! Mr. Toplady is found guilty of saying, that—"the religion of Jesus Christ affirms—"that we are saved and called with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to the Father's own purpose and grace, *which was not sold to us on certain conditions to be fulfilled by ourselves*, but was given us in Christ before the world was.' Now," (he adds) "it unfortunately happens for the conclusion of this gentleman, that the apostle Paul had said the very same thing in the very same language, *one single member of a sentence merely explanatory, excepted*, seventeen centuries before Mr. Toplady was born." And thus concealing the whole of the unscriptural doctrine of Mr. Toplady, he requests the reader "will have the goodness to compare the passage with the words of St. Paul, and then to listen to the conclusion of the Barrister,"—and he thus endeavours to make it appear that I pronounce **THE APOSTLE to be AN INFIDEL.**

What must we think of a cause that requires to be thus defended? Do the evangelical ministry think they are *served* by any writer who can conduct himself thus unworthily? Will it not rather tend to bring them greatly into suspicion? How can we in any instance depend upon the integrity of men as public teachers, who when they have a system to defend, will resort to the most shameful mis-statements for the purpose of evading objections which they have not the manliness to meet, nor the ability to answer?

the profligate—to reform the immoral—stand manifest in every page of his most valuable writings. If the Infidel had stigmatized his labours, or the Atheist vilified his efforts, I should not have been surprised. Had a disciple of Voltaire, or a pupil of Payne, despised his writings and aspersed his fame, I should not have been alarmed. But when I read the following passage in a letter addressed to me by a divine—and of the Church of England, too—I do confess I paused over it with astonishment.—

“ You say,—‘ There is, perhaps, no public writer, to whose public writings in the cause of moral virtue, the public are more indebted than to Mr. Paley,’—I say, that perhaps, there are not many who have contributed more to increase the mass of moral evil, and therefore, deserve less from mankind, than Mr. Paley. So that while to your dazzled eye, he appears as a bright luminary leading to the temple of truth, because you look at him through the meretricious glare in which high station and, *public countenance* hath made him shine, I BEHOLD him as ma-

riners do those light-houses which are purposely upon rocks in the midst of the sea, by way of warning the navigator from coming near *."

It was against the unsupported calumny of ROWLAND HILL, that I was led to defend the memory of Mr. PALEY. If I considered this invective against him as injurious, I should regret to have been in any way instrumental in producing it. But I consider it as the best evidence of his having been a strenuous teacher of Christian truth, that these anti-moralists are thus forward to defame him. Those moral exertions which the *public countenance* rewarded, will never fail to be derided by an order of teachers who consider "good works," as mere chaff and stubble, fit only to be scattered before the wind of their doctrine.

It is the pious doctor's opinion that the labours of Mr. Paley, in the cause of *moral virtue* do not merit the thanks of his followers. "Who are they?" he asks, "that

* Dr. Hawker's "Letter to a Barrister," p. 35.

thank him. Do many living saints thank him?"—To this, I do not hesitate to reply, that I believe they do not. The Calvinistic Methodists—I beg pardon, I should have said, *the living* SAINTS—have too rooted an antipathy to moral virtue to thank any one who labours to enforce the practice of it. But I really think that Satan is under no small obligation, and owes no small share of thanks to this new spiritual body; and indeed we find that he is not wholly insensible to his obligations, for we learn that

“ SATAN, that raven unclean
Who croaks in the ears of *the* SAINTS,
Compell'd by a power unseen,
ADMINISTERS OFT TO THEIR WANTS *.”

This being the case—they can do no less certainly, than make a suitable return for his services; and to do them justice, they appear to be, in this instance, sufficiently grateful.

By the way, it were to be wished that SATAN “croaked” less “in the ears of *the*

* Vide Lady Huntingdon's Collection of Hymns. Hymn 247.

SAINTS," for their doctrines are many of them so much like his whisperings, that they appear sometimes to confound the one with the other.

The bulk of mankind have their time fully occupied in acquiring the means of subsistence. Their daily labour supplies their daily wants; but it leaves them very little, if any, leisure for the cultivation of their minds. It is enough that they are skilful in their particular callings; to expect more from them, is to expect that they should possess what they have had no means or opportunity of acquiring. Their natural understandings, if they have not been culpably neglected, are usually sufficient for all the ordinary purposes of life. But they have no notion of accurate reasoning, nor are they at all capable of that examination which all propositions must undergo before the mind can arrive at any sound and satisfactory conclusion as to their truth. To preach the abstruse doctrines of CALVINISTIC METHODISM to persons of this class, is the most perverse of all absurdities. And yet it

is to such persons that all these doctrines are for the most part, addressed; and amongst them it is, that all the penny and two-penny tracts are chiefly circulated. Not that this description includes the whole sect. No—they count numbers among them that are raised above this class in station and circumstances, but who are nevertheless not much above it in the rank of intellect. 'A more lucrative, or more successful industry, has elevated some greatly above others in the scale of pecuniary wealth, but in point of understanding,—I speak of them as a body,—they are all pretty well upon a level; men of mean and low education, make up the mass of the sect; that there are exceptions to this description I am well aware; but they are few comparatively. It is most extraordinary, but it is true, that the most absurd errors will sometimes seize hold on the strongest minds. A man, who on other subjects thinks most correctly, falls in unaccountably, with principles propagated by persons whose authority, he would in other instances, be ashamed to own, and whose lead, on other occasions, he

would disdain to follow. This often happens in politics, and it happens sometimes in religion. Many, from whom the public expected better things, were the zealous disciples of TOM PAINE! The reveries of that insane prophet, Mr. BROTHERS, found a *faithful* convert in a man of most distinguished talents, and a member of the House of Commons! The modern prophetess, HANNAH SOUTHCOT, is not without her crowd of *true believers*, and some rank among them whose understanding, on other subjects, is far from contemptible. So it is with the disciples of error of every denomination, and so it is here. Some have been bit in the heel, by the tarantula of Methodism, who, like Achilles, were in no other part vulnerable.

These self-styled GOSPEL Ministers—these adepts in the mysteries of methodism, take care to keep their eyes steadily upon the flock; the wealthiest among which never fail to receive their due share of deference and attention. If the *evangelist* keeps a shop,—which is not uncommon,—he takes good care to make the counter and the pulpit,

play into each other's hands ; the congregation of the one, become the customers of the other ; it proves a good speculation to conduct both the trades in conjunction—(for preaching is grown with this class of persons, to be quite a *trade*)—that the profits of the *Lord's day*, may either balance the losses, or increase the gains, of the week. At length the *reverend* mechanic finds the meeting-house so good a thing, that upon a fair calculation, he finds *it will pay*, to devote his whole time and *labour* to the MINISTRY : *thus inspired*, he follows the lead of his interest, till he gropes his way by degrees to the centre of the Calvinistic vineyard, and there vies with the busiest of his fellow-labourers in watering the branches of bigotry, and manuring the roots of error.

But if the *evangelic* pastor should happen to be unmarried, which is most likely, the chance is still more in his favour ; should some of the ignorant wealthy be numbered among his followers, the speculation in this case, brightens prodigiously—a bow,—a smile,

—a visit, from the pious young man, is a great favor, and the pious young man soon learns in what quarter it is best to bow, —and smile,—and visit. His information in these matters never fails to be pretty accurate; for these Saints take good case never to unite themselves but with the *Elect* of FORTUNE.—They never tread the road of matrimony, but in the track of her wheel. This is a speculation which more or less prompts, and presides over, all their *labours of love*. Their eye is ever on the watch. They know well who has a rich uncle, and who has an estate in expectancy,—and they stand, like Hogs in an orchard, waiting for a wind-fall.

He that in vain attempted to succeed in trade—and whose parents found it difficult to dispose of him in the world—having his natural dulness increased by his perfect ignorance of every thing but the outward sanctity and the common-place cant of the sect in which he was born and bred—is roused on a sudden by a *serious* impression of love for the ministry—his vanity is stirred

where his industry could never be excited—he is forthwith sent to the academic nursery for young evangelists—and after avowing his assent to a declaration of faith, ready cut and dried for his subscription—going through the usual course of training, and serving out his short apprenticeship to the *mystery* of evangelical preaching—he binds up his bundle of doctrines, buys a CONCORDANCE and COMMON-PLACE BOOK, and with this stock in trade, sets out on the great concern of soul-saving.

A skilful physician notes with care and accuracy, all the general symptoms and circumstances of disease, that the patient may be directed to the means of cure adapted to his particular case. He acquaints him with the morbid causes to which his distemper is to be attributed, and gives him practical directions that he may know what to follow and what to avoid. So likewise, the true *moral* physician dissects the human heart, and gives an anatomy of the human character—he combines all the facts that illustrate his subject, and makes the man

intimate with himself. But the *evangelical* empiric of our days, knows no more than the technical terms of his science—faith and election—guilt and atonement—sin and salvation—with these, and his magic-lantern of mystery, he travels forth and sets reason and truth at defiance.

To the word "*faith*," so perpetually on their tongues, they annex no distinct idea. The most extravagant expectations are entertained of its efficacy, at the very time that they cannot give even a precise definition of its meaning, much less any account of its operation.

Most truly, and with literal exactness do they describe themselves as preaching *the word*: and most justly do their hearers describe themselves as sitting under *the sound*, of the gospel; for as to any genuine illustration of the *sense* of it, it is in vain to be looked for.

It has been sometimes contended that however apparently prejudicial the CALVINISTIC system may be, still, those who are brought up in that religious persuasion, are

more sober, more orderly, and more serious, in their manners, and deportment than others. Now if it is meant to affirm that their MINDS are more PURE, or their PRINCIPLES more *strict*, I deny the fact. That there may be more of outward gravity, and more of the FORM OF GODLINESS,—that there may be louder hymns and longer prayers,—all this may be.—But as far as this goes, we see only THE OUTSIDE OF THE PLATTER. That they resist secret temptation more strongly,—that they are privately more pure,—that they are more disinterested, or more upright,—that they practise the precepts of religion more rigorously—that they govern their tempers more conspicuously, or perform the duties of life more conscientiously, than those who, having never heard of CALVIN or his Creed, have been educated in the severe school of CHRISTIAN MORALITY ;—this I deny

It is insanity to talk of that system of belief which composes “the faith” of Calvinistic, or what is termed Evangelical Methodism.—It is insanity to talk of it as making its followers better than others. It

has a direct tendency to make them worse; and AS FAR AS IT IS ACTED UPON, it must inevitably do so. Fortunately for society, all the inborn feelings of our nature oppose it—all the instinctive principles of moral action, which God has implanted in the soul of man, are at war with it.—If it were not that REASON and CONSCIENCE triumphed over the doctrines which that faith inculcates, religion, as far as it respects every practical purpose for which it was revealed, would sink into a useless routine of outward observances—nay worse—it would corrupt the energies of nature, and pervert the principles of virtue. If the children that are brought up in *that* faith, were not whipt out of its PRACTICAL CONSEQUENCES, they would be vipers in the bosom of the state.—If, while they were taught that they can of themselves do nothing that is good, they were not corrected whenever of themselves they did any thing that was evil.—If, at the same time that they were assured that the gospel has neither terms nor conditions, they were not punished for acts of disobedience.—If, in ad-

dition to this, the public law of the state did not concur with the powerful convictions of conscience to neutralize in these doctrines, all the licentious and destructive consequences to which they lead, the community could not be held together; for the principles which the evangelical teachers disseminate, are so shamefully false, and so shockingly pernicious, that if they were ACTED UPON with as much zeal as they are PROPAGATED, they would annul the commandments of God by destroying their efficacy, and reduce the moral order of society to a chaos of confusion and crime. The creed of these Apostles of Calvin, only requires to be extensively exemplified in its ACTIVE EFFECTS and PRACTICAL CONSEQUENCES to expose it in all its nakedness of error and calamity, to the terrified gaze of mankind.

Wherefore is it that those who set up as EVANGELICAL PREACHERS insist so strongly and so unceasingly, on the necessity of *faith*? The true reason is this—their doctrines lead to conclusions which so greatly bewilder and becloud the understanding, and are

withal so contradictory to common sense, that they must be received, if they be received at all, with an uninquiring and implicit *belief*. The importance of *faith*, must therefore, be perpetually repeated and enforced. Damnation must be denounced against all who doubt, and the wrath of God must be threatened against all who disbelieve. For as inquiry into the truth of *their* doctrines would infallibly bring them into suspicion, this must be precluded at the outset; and this can only be done—in the very way in which it is done—by stigmatizing all distrust as the commencement of scepticism, and the fatal prelude of infidelity.

Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. This was the sound and earnest advice of Saint Paul. But this new order of Saints are very shy of desiring their disciples to *prove* all things. They proceed on the reverse of the apostolic precept—they manufacture the doctrines—put them into their hands ready made—and then exhort them to “hold fast.” They are literally the *authors* of the *faith* of all their followers.

Which faith bears as much resemblance to the system of revealed truth, as a dead body does to the living soul.

This new order of evangelists establish a pontifical sovereignty within their own circle. They want, thank God, the power and the means—but they do not want the effort, nor the inclination—to shackle the human understanding, and suppress the exertions of reason, and the right of private judgment, as completely as in the days when sacerdotal tyranny was at its height. Their proceedings in IRELAND will bear witness to this.—We shall come to that matter by and bye.

When it is distinctly and undeniably shewn that both by their doctrines and their discourses, these evangelical ministers depreciate and cry down MORALITY and MORAL PREACHERS, we find that like detected culprits, they have no resource but in denying the fact; they make no attempt to refute the evidence; but unable to defend themselves by argument, they endeavour to escape by *abjuration*. These notable reasoners seem to imagine,

that when they have denied themselves, to be in the wrong, they have proved themselves to be in the right.

Never do these these men confirm their assertions by direct testimony. It is in vain to call upon them 'so to do. You will be told that you are an infidel to disbelieve what they affirm, or deny what they advance! With this *evidence* you must be satisfied!—with this *proof* you must rest content.

Mr. Burder, for example, in his Village Sermons, tells us—and the same intelligence may be found in evangelical tracts and pamphlets that would form a pile higher than the eye could reach—he tells us “CHRIST *has obeyed the precepts of the law* IN OUR STEAD. He has also *borne the punishment* IN OUR ROOM *.”

If this be so, what have the perpetrators of most mischievous and wicked actions, what have they to fear?

What have the ROBESPIERRE's, and MARAT's, and the whole gang of ruffian regicides, who

* Burder's Village Sermons, 7th Ed. Sermon 3. p. 35.

went smoaking with the gore of their slaughtered countrymen to the scaffold, what future punishment have they to dread—None. Christ, it 'seems, has BORNE THE PUNISHMENT IN THEIR ROOM. Even the present renowned Usurper, who in his chace after royalty has snuffed the scent of blood with every breeze !—even this atrocious tyrant, before whose merciless march Empires stagger, and Nations disappear,—who shall condemn his violation of every rule of justice; his contempt of every maxim of that law which came from God to be at once the consolation and control of man? Who, I say, shall condemn him?—None. *Christ has obeyed the precepts of the law* IN HIS STEAD!! If this doctrine be true, the necessity of obedience to the ten commandments, which contain the law, is superseded.

“Thou shalt do no murder,” is a law which the robber despises, and the assassin sets at nought; but when in the agonies of their remorse, their death-bed shall shake under them, will they not rejoice to hear that CHRIST HAS OBEYED THE PRE-

CEPTS OF THE LAW IN THEIR STEAD ; and will they not exult to be told when their career of crime has reached its close, that CHRIST HAS BORNE THE PUNISHMENT IN THEIR ROOM.—Every agent in iniquity will readily receive this tuition—this doctrine every bad man will willingly embrace—but at the close of life the terrors of conscience will triumph over the delusions of Calvinism, and his fears will give the lie to his faith.

But let these champions of the new divinity, or any one in the sweeping train of their disciples—let them come forward, and avow by what authority they teach such lessons to the multitude *. Does our Saviour in any

* I have just read “ A Defence of Evangelical Preaching, in a Letter to a *Barrister*, occasioned by his ‘Hints, &c.’ by a *Layman*.”—If I had not learned from the title-page, that the “HINTS” *occasioned* this Letter, I should certainly not have discovered it from any connection that it has with that work, or to the statements contained in it. It exhibits a confused heap of texts brought together without order or connection.—Any person with a CONCORDANCE at his elbow, might have collected these with equal ease, and with as little expense of thought. This worthy Layman appears to have fatigued his memory, without exercising his understanding. Indeed his mind is not fitted for very elaborate investigation. He is one of those who read more than they examine, and quote more than they understand.

page or passage of his gospel, affirm THAT HE HAS OBEYED THE PRECEPTS OF THE LAW IN OUR STEAD—Does he declare at any time, or in any instance, to the wicked and disobedient, I HAVE BORNE THE PUNISHMENT IN YOUR ROOM? If he does not—if his language bears no affinity to such a doctrine, what must we think of its teachers? Is it the deceitful title of *evangelical*—which they sound forth as with a trumpet throughout the nation—is it this, that is to play the fool with our reason, and make us flock blindfold to their standard? I trust we are not quite so far gone!—

Men are acted upon by what they hear and see, and these are times in which evil principles are not slow to produce evil actions.—These are times in which we can ill afford to part with the laws of moral duty; if they are to be sacrificed—as apparently they are—at the shrine of Calvinism, I for one, shall throw no incense on the pile.

When the consequences of their delusive tenets are exposed, these teachers have recourse to subterfuge and evasion. The remark made by BURKE upon the preceptors

in the new school of philosophy and politics, applies exactly to the tutors of the new divinity: "Thus they proceed (said he) whilst little notice is taken of their doctrines; but when they are to be examined upon the PLAIN MEANING OF THEIR WORDS and the DIRECT TENDENCY OF THEIR DOCTRINE, then *equivocations* and *slippery constructions* come into play*." When did impostors of any kind deal in demonstration?—Never. Nor ever will. It does not suit their purpose.

These Spiritual Pastors have publicly taught and declared "that *error* is more dangerous than VICE." In private, indeed, when they have no way left to elude the charge of destroying the importance and necessity of good works, by preaching up *faith* ALONE, they boldly affirm that FAITH CANNOT BE WITHOUT GOOD WORKS. But when the intolerant spirit of persecution throws them off their guard, the doctrine is exhibited in its true colours, and we learn that "if a WICKED MAN is SOUND IN THE FAITH, there is some

* Letter on the French Revolution, p. 97.

hope of him *.” Here we find a direct refutation of their own assertion. They shift their ground according as it becomes necessary either to defend *error* or justify *intolerance*. They have the contradictory affirmations both ready to urge, according as

* The following extract from the publication of the “Letters from Mr. Vidler to Mr. Fuller, on the universal restoration, with a statement of facts attending that controversy,” deserves to be seriously read and steadily remembered.

“It is a maxim pretty generally allowed among Calvinistic churches, that *error* is more dangerous than *vice*. This maxim was *publicly avowed* at the association of the particular Baptist churches, at Chatham in Kent, 1793. At that assembly I was publicly excluded from their communion, for believing and avowing the doctrine of the restitution of all things. The moderator, when he had pronounced the sentence of excision, added,—‘I am constrained to say, that your *moral conduct* has been such as would do honour to a much better cause than that in which you are engaged.’—And *the minister*, who preached on the occasion to a very crowded audience, said—‘The universal doctrine is an heresy, and every one who holds it is a heretic: not that every heretic is a wicked man; for heretics are often the *holiest of men*; but *heresy* is more dangerous than *vice*: for if a *wicked man* is SOUND IN THE FAITH, there is some hope of him; such are often recovered: but as for heretics, they are very seldom recovered from their errors.’—There were near THIRTY Calvinist ministers of different denominations present, and *only one* of them disavowed the sentiment that was *so publicly taught*.”

the followers of Calvinism are to be *deluded*, or those who have forsaken it *oppressed*.— If these new LORDS OF ARTICLES should ever attain the ascendancy to which their hopes seem to have destined them, and which their efforts are rapidly preparing, Woe to those whose reason will not bend itself to the yoke of their creed.

This restless fraternity, mad with the insatiable thirst of proselytism, aspire to evangelize empires, and to extend their spiritual ascendancy over the most remote kingdoms of the earth. With no other authority than their own signet, they send forth missionaries to declare those doctrines and dictate that faith which THEY decree to be true, and to which therefore, the judgment of all nations must conform.* The executive Convention of Calvinists, in their address read at the conference held at Hernnhuth, June 11, 1806, give their co-operative Convention in England, the following singular, but important intelligence.

“ You have, *as yet*, not met *every where*, with equal *success*; but it has, however, uni-

formly *been such* that all intelligent Christians agree, that *with the NINETEENTH century, A NEW ERA has commenced in the church of Christ. A new conflict has begun between CHRIST and BELIAL. THE ADHERENTS OF BOTH ARE ARMING on either side**.”—This is a somewhat strange description of the effect produced by the mission of those who should be “Preachers of PEACE and GOOD WILL towards men.”

But these ring-leaders of methodism, who appear to talk so much at their ease of this new conflict, should not only, I think, give us some satisfaction with respect to the question in issue, but some security against the consequence of these hostilities which they are thus preparing. It is not difficult to predict what will eventually be the effect of thus proscribing the religious tenets, and disturbing the private tranquility, of his majesty’s foreign subjects. It were to be wished that Mr. HARDCASTLE, and Mr. BURDER, —who it seems were deputed to answer this Address, communicated by “dear brother

* Vide Evangelical Magazine, Nov. 1807.

Steinkoff," to the Missionary Convention.—It were to be wished that these worthy gentlemen had inquired from their "beloved brethren," some particulars as to the probable issue of this contest, and its possible effect on the safety and allegiance of our foreign possessions. But all this seems to be below their "high consideration." They return their thanks for this gracious message and communication, in the true style of CONSULAR dignity.

"Accept, faithful brethren, our Christian salutations; let us have a share in the petitions you present in your assembly, &c. &c.*"

All this kind of proceeding, is hitherto new and unheard-of in the history of this country!! Its consequences remain to be seen.—Thus much, however, may be remarked, that those engaged in it, do not appear to make the essential interests of this kingdom, as connected with its foreign territories, a matter of very scrupulous attention. And thus far I would suggest, that if this

desperate spirit of proselytism is permitted, as it has been, to force itself into the distant dependencies of our government, these religious revolutionists—strongly as they draw the bow—will one day shoot the arrow beyond their mark *.”

* On the subject of the Indian Missionaries, I need enter into no detail. It has been most ably discussed by MAJOR SCOTT WARING, and with a force and effect that has at length led the India Company to perceive the expediency of putting a stop to the progress of a mis-guided zeal, the fatal effects of which they began very seriously to feel, and which they have wisely bestirred themselves to avert. To the statements of that writer, delivered, as they are, with the strong emphasis of truth and feeling, the public are greatly indebted. He has brought the evil fully before the eyes of the Directors, while yet the remedy is within their power.—Surely India is not a dominion into which these Methodist Missionaries can safely carry the wildfire of their fanaticism.—I trust, unless it is meant to strike it from the map of the British Empire, that it will never again be so carelessly exposed to the dangerous issue of a HOLY WAR.

The sums collected for Missionary purposes are incredible. We have noticed on a former occasion, from testimony under their own hands, the shameless manner in which the poorest of the poor, are stript of the earnings of their hard labour, to support these insane schemes of conversion. The following recent fact—which is but too authentic—may be added to the “EVANGELICANA.” I have thought proper to make it public, lest it should not

In what does RIGHTEOUSNESS consist, but in obedience to the will of God? Is it not the duty of every religious instructor to exhort men to govern their conduct by an adherence to that will? In a word, ought they not to be

find its way into that record of *pious* donations, and as an *instructive* illustration of the difference between *evangelical*, and *Christian* CHARITY.

A few weeks since, a Mr. WHITAKER, and within a few days afterwards, Mrs. W. his wife, both died at HACKNEY, and were interred on the same day. Mr. W. left CHESHIRE many years ago, and having in the course of his trade as a Farrier, acquired some little property, he some time previous to his decease, had retired from business. He was an *evangelical* methodist, not a whit behind the most zealous of the brethren, as the following bequest will bear witness. He has left ONE THOUSAND POUNDS to the *Missionary Society*, although he had two poor, aged, and infirm SISTERS, who are at present residing at a place called Brokencross, near Macclesfield, and who are *at this very time*, and have long been, PAUPERS on the *parish of Prestbury*, in CHESHIRE !!!

No doubt the *Missionary Society* consider *Brother WHITAKER* as *sound in the faith* !! The EXECUTOR to this *charitable saint*, too, is an EVANGELICAL PREACHER !!

We here see the influence of this *new* religion! This unnatural zealot, with an unfeeling indifference leaves his nearest kindred to struggle against the combined calamities of poverty and old age, while with cold pride, and cruel enthusiasm, he gives a THOUSAND POUNDS towards the propagation of methodism among the heathen, the most unenlightened of whom would manifest a *sense of moral duty*, that would put such conduct to shame.

teachers of **RIGHTEOUSNESS**? Yet so openly the reverse of this are the high-priests of the new church, that it is a phrase perpetually in their mouths—a phrase which, by endless repetition, they have made familiar to the profligate vulgar of all classes—that “**RIGHTEOUSNESS** is **FILTHY RAGS.**” Instead of explaining that passage, and putting the ignorant on their guard against any misconception of its meaning, by supposing that the prophet meant, in the least degree, to depreciate the infinite and eternal worth of that obedience to the word and will of God, which constitutes righteousness, they, with malignant pains, impress upon the minds of the multitude that very misconception against which they should most anxiously have warned them. These anti-moral priests pass over all those beautiful and impressive exhortations to righteousness, which our Saviour every where expresses, and to the practice of which he promises the reward of eternal life.—They omit the whole of the most powerful incentives, and most pathetic persuasions to righteousness, with which the Bible, from the beginning to the end, abounds. All this they

either wilfully conceal, or contemptuously disregard; and they cull out a single passage from ISAIAH, which they most grossly pervert from its true meaning, in order to seduce the ignorant to conceive, that RIGHTEOUSNESS, the practice of which the Son of God himself lived to exemplify, and died to enforce—is FILTHY RAGS!!

What band of atheists—let them come from France, or from wherever else they may—can spread amongst us a more dreadful and dangerous delusion? What benefit can redound to God or man from such tuition? What can justify it? What can be hoped from it?—*Righteousness* is the reverse of that system of guilt and crime, which arises from the repetition of that which is *wrong*. What rebels could repair to the work of destroying the constitution of *moral* society with a maxim better suited for the purpose than this—that *righteousness* is FILTHY RAGS!!! Can any man, or set of men, inflict a more serious injury on the community, than by producing such a conviction?! Can any thing better pave the way for the introduction of anarchy and

atheism, than the adoption of this doctrine ?!!

Let us now observe upon this passage of the prophet which is thus distorted from its true meaning for the purpose of proving the utter *worthlessness* of all moral virtue. “We are all,” (says the prophet) “as an unclean thing, and all our *righteousnesses are as filthy rags* *.”

Let us now examine and see whether these anti-moral priests are in any manner justified in citing these words to support their condemnation of morality.

Does ISAIAH here affirm that the practice of righteousness is to be held as of no account? Is he to be understood as declaring that a sincere obedience to the MORAL commandments of God, as set forth in his gospel, are of no avail towards our future salvation? Or to put the question still more closely, does he pronounce RIGHTEOUSNESS to be *filthy rags*?—I aver that he does not.—His doctrine is directly the reverse.—And

* Isa. lxiv. 6.

these new gospel teachers wilfully misrepresent him, for the shameful purpose of supporting by his authority, that contempt which they manifest for morality and the efficacy of good works. They know that the ignorant and uninquiring crowds to whom they preach, will never examine into the truth of what they are taught, or compare the passages they quote, with the context to which it relates, in order to determine how far it will warrant their comment, or confirm the doctrine it is brought to support.—But I shall proceed to defend the prophet ISAIAH from the palpable misrepresentation of him by the new order of evangelists. To do this no more is necessary than merely to quote the verse that precedes that from which this phrase is taken.

The Prophet, as is evident, is deploring the depraved state of the JEWISH CHURCH, which had departed from its primitive piety and degenerated into vice and superstition. In his prayer he dwells on the inestimable value in the sight of heaven, of that *righte-*

ousness, which the mass of the Jewish people had forsaken.

“THOU MEETEST HIM,” (says the Prophet) “that rejoiceth and WORKETH RIGHTEOUSNESS; those that remember thee in thy ways—“ behold thou art wroth, for WE have sinned.”

He then goes on to describe the state of his countrymen—for it is *to them* he is alluding, and not to mankind at large—and he represents them as having justly incurred the wrath of God, by their neglect of his laws, and lamenting their DEGENERACY FROM RIGHTEOUSNESS, he thus proceeds:

“But WE are all as an unclean thing; and all OUR RIGHTEOUSNESSES are as FILTHY RAGS; and we all do fade as a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away—and there is none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee, for thou hast hid thy face from us, and hast consumed us BECAUSE OF OUR INIQUITIES.”

We here see that it is actually the moral declension—the fall of his countrymen from

virtue—that he represents as drawing down the calamities with which they were visited.

“How is the FAITHFUL CITY,” (says he) “BECOME AN HARLOT? It WAS full of judgment, RIGHTEOUSNESS. *lodged in it, but now* MURDERERS; thy SILVER is become DROSS.”

This sufficiently manifests the meaning of the figurative expression of the prophet, that their RIGHTEOUSNESS was become as FILTHY RAGS.—What confidence, then, can be placed in a class of men, who to support their own doctrines, can thus delude the multitude by such flagrant mis-representations.

Every chapter in Isaiah abounds with the praises of righteousness, and sets forth the eternal rewards that will follow the practice of it.

“Open ye the gates,” (says the Prophet) “that the *righteous* nation, which keepeth the truth, may enter in.”

And yet we are told—and the mouths of the profligate vulgar are made to re-echo the assertion—that RIGHTEOUSNESS is *filthy rags*. And the prophet ISAIAH is quoted to confirm the truth of it !!!

Really the evil of all this is great and deplorable. But I trust we shall open our eyes before such doctrines, bring with them—as sooner or later they will—their own inevitable consequences*.

* In the first part of the “Hints,” as the reader may remember, I cited on this subject, the following impressive passage from the Book of Revelations, (c. 19. v. 8.) —“And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in FINE LINEN, *clean and white*, for the FINE LINEN is the RIGHTEOUSNESS of the saints.”—And I then contrasted with this the language of the VILLAGE SERMONS. In the pamphlet written by Mr. COLLYER,—who is pleased to dignify himself with the title of an *Evangelical Preacher*,—the author of those Sermons is exposed as effectually as he can be, by the following feeble attempt to defend him at the expense of *truth*, and by the aid of the most evident *mis-statement*.

“Mr. Burder,” (says this writer) “is indeed the person ostensibly attacked, because he has had the temerity to repeat *what the prophet said before him*—‘My dear CHILDREN, why do you hope to go to heaven? Is it because you are not so bad as others; because you say your prayers, and go to church or to meeting? If so, you are proud, proud of your own RIGHTEOUSNESS, which the SCRIPTURE calls FILTHY RAGS.’”

What the prophet said before him!—Where has the prophet made any such address to children as this? Again —“the language employed in the Village Sermons, is not an opinion of the writer, but LITERALLY a quotation from the PROPHET.”—After what I have said above, this audacious assertion will require no comment—Its falsehood

“Though,” (says an eloquent and sensible writer) “the present increasing luxury

is too gross and too glaring. So imbecile a defender as Mr. COLLYER, only betrays the cause he attempts to serve; he will do wisely hereafter to think before he writes. His pompous nothings may pass muster among the old women in the republic of methodism, but in the republic of letters we are not quite so amorous of absurdity.

I have no room to remark at any length, on the inflated style of his pamphlet, on which he seems to value himself so highly; but we will take a short specimen.

“It is not my intention,” (says he) “to enter into a defence of those gentlemen, *either* of whom *are* quite competent to repel the injurious charges alleged against them, notwithstanding the evasive intimations which are made respecting the illiterateness of some of them; but this writer has so interwoven his attack that it is impossible to *separate* these ALTOGETHER. It is impossible to follow him along his serpentine *track*, which sometimes wears the appearance of *winding* solely to *asperse*, without convicting him of that, to which the softest name that can be given, is mis-representation.”

Here we have in one single passage, a grammatical error, a ridiculous *iricism*, and the metaphor of a serpentine *track* that is made to *asperse*, and to *asperse* by *winding* !!!

But so anxious is this evangelical champion, for the literary reputation of his pamphlet, that he sends forth a list of “Errata,” after its publication, and he subjoins *five lines* of comment, in which small space there are two blunders. We have a *plural* antecedent with a relative *singular*, and are told of the pressure of his unavoidable avocations,—not during the time that he

in one part of the community, with the increased and increasing distress in another, do greatly favour the corruption of public morals, I think that another very vigorous and active cause of the declension of virtue and the increase of vice, will be found in those polluted, unreasonable, and absurd representations of the Christian religion which have of late years, been with too little consideration patronized by the great, and with too much facility listened to by the populace. Of those persons who ever think seriously of going to heaven, the majority, would fain travel thither in company with that guide who requires the fewest sacrifices at their hands; who orders the least self-denial, and permits the greatest self-indul-

was writing and publishing this pamphlet,—but “during the time that THIS PAMPHLET was BOTH *writing* and *publishing*.”

This gentleman tells the public with becoming modesty, the object of his publication—“It is,” (says he) “to PROSTRATE *the affected superiority of a man who assaults that WHICH I BELIEVE TO BE TRUE*†!!!

GIL BLAS, you owe your life to your country—STUDY YOUR GRAMMAR.

† p. 42.

gence. Thus they are pre-disposed to lend a willing ear to the instructions of any religious juggler who endeavours to persuade them that faith without holiness, grace without exertion, or righteousness *by imputation*, will supersede the necessity of personal goodness, and exempt the favoured convert from the painful toils of practical morality. Such admonitions, covered over with a great deal of cant, in order to disguise the rottenness of the ingredients and the unwholesomeness of the mixture, have been called ‘EVANGELICAL PREACHING,’ and at other times, emphatically, ‘PREACHING *the* GOSPEL,’ and the great and everlasting principles of MORAL DUTY have been shamefully libelled, and most industriously lowered in the public estimation, by men professing to teach the holy doctrine of the holy Jesus *.”

If this statement required corroboration, it will find the strongest it can possibly

* Vide Preface to “Religion without Cant, by ROBERT FELLOWES, A. M.”—A work which cannot be too strongly recommended to the attention of the public, as an eloquent and masterly delineation of the principles of Christian truth.

receive in the following statement of the BISHOP OF LINCOLN, who, when speaking of a class of men—"who professing to believe all the church doctrines, yet RENOUNCE ITS AUTHORITY, and REVILE ITS MINISTERS,"—expresses himself thus,

“Many of these FANATICS, by *pretending to an extraordinary degree of sanctity*, to a FAITH not to be found in the gospel, to an especial call or gift of grace, which supersedes the necessity of education, and of the regular ordination commanded, and practised by the apostles themselves, SEDUCE THE PEOPLE FROM THEIR APPOINTED MINISTERS, separate them from the communion of the church, GAIN A COMPLETE ASCENDENCY OVER THEM, and instil into their minds the MOST DANGEROUS OPINIONS, with the most active enthusiasm. The effect of this *mis-called* EVANGELICAL PREACHING, too often appears in the despondence of religious melancholy, or in the licentiousness of shameless profligacy, and in PRINCIPLES and conduct, which the precepts of the gospel, and the whole history of mankind declare TO BE UT-

TERLY INCONSISTENT WITH TRUE RELIGION,
AND THE WELL BEING OF SOCIETY *.”

A zealous Champion of methodism †, whose popularity enables him to give an extensive circulation to whatever comes from his pen, and whose “VILLAGE DIALOGUES, have been already noticed in the former part of these “Hints,” has delivered “in the similitude of a dream,” and under the character of “AN OLD OBSERVER,” such a picture of the clergy of this kingdom, that if it comes at all near the truth, would justify all that active indignation against them which it is so well fitted to excite.

The *Press* is a great and powerful engine in the hands of the new order of ecclesiastics. The REGULAR CLERGY seem to be sitting without concern under their own fig-tree, while all the arts that can move the minds of men against them, are employed with the greatest activity and effect. It is

* Charge delivered to the Clergy of the Diocese of Lincoln, at the triennial visitation in June and July, 1800. By G. Prettyman, D. D. F. R. S. Lord Bishop of Lincoln.

† The Rev. ROWLAND HILL.

not their DOCTRINES that are reprobated for if these were false or unsound, the public would be indebted to whoever discovered their error, or exposed their fallacy. In such a case too, however severely they were attacked, they might be recanted if they were wrong, or defended if they were right. Reason might oppose itself to reason, and argument to argument. But the imputations against them are wholly *personal*; the whole body is indiscriminately stigmatized as pregnant with private vice—as apostate, abandoned, and corrupt. In this case there is no means of counter-proof, and the charges are left to work their own way*.

* While I am speaking on the subject of *personal* attack, I cannot pass without remark the assertion of Dr. Hawker, that I have endeavoured to blacken his character, which assertion is re-echoed by the Eclectic Review, and repeated by all the pamphlets to which the “Hints” have given rise. But neither Dr. Hawker himself, nor any of his advocates, have brought forward a *single instance* in which I have alluded in the most distant manner to his private character, or his personal conduct; or to that of any one of those writers whose doctrines I have been led to discuss. It is not in their power to produce an instance, *and this they know*.

The doctrines of this class of teachers, and the consequences of those doctrines, are so closely connected toge-

The "Village Dialogues," abound in such descriptions as are calculated to compel

ther, that the one must be exposed through the medium of the other. This I have done, and no more. But the language of the ECLECTIC REVIEW will sufficiently manifest the ferocious spirit which animates this *evangelical* body. Such a specimen of *literary criticism*, I think has never yet been exhibited to the world, as may be found in their review of the three pamphlets occasioned by the "Hints." I extract a sample.

The BARRISTER is "a pamphleteer so *abjectly despicable*," that they lament the notice he obtains. "Next to the approbation of the worthy," (say these elegant and courtly scholars) "we should covet the enmity of THE VILE; nor can we think it a trifling honour to any system or person, to the cause of truth and the character of its defenders, to be insulted by *such an individual as this*."—An individual "who has made the disguise he wears, so *unspeakably disgusting* to the intelligent public, that he has only to unmask his portentous front IN ORDER TO RECEIVE THE INDELIBLE CONSUMMATION OF HIS IGNOMINY."

"It is some consolation to be convinced THAT WE HAVE NOW SEEN HUMAN NATURE IN ITS VERY BASEST DEGRADATION."

He "evinces such a combination of ferocity and meanness, such an epitome of the HYÆNA and the WORM, as we are confident will never be exceeded by any future being *that may appear in the likeness of man*."

In suffering the name of BUNYAN to flow from his pen, he—"gives proof of infatuation *scarcely consistent with MENTAL SANITY*. *It was fitting* that such should be the penalty of SACRILEGE, that the disturber of the dead should be *smitten with FATUITY* in his unholy work, and issuing from the desecrated sepulchre, should announce,

the deluded peasantry of this kingdom, to think and act towards their parish minister with no feelings but those of aversion and disdain. The "SALE OF CURATES," is but another quiver laden with arrows of stronger venom, and directed at the same target. It was suggested, it seems, by the late Clergy Residence Act, which led this *evangelical* DREAMER to represent the divines of the establishment as put up to public auction, and through the medium of this *fiction* to exhibit them to the public as objects of contempt, and to load them with shame, ignominy, and dishonour.

in the gibberish of his exultation, *the punishment of his awful temerity* †."

What a specimen of *cool* and *dispassionate inquiry* !!! And this purports to be a REVIEW!!! The *pious* editors could not have furnished the public with a clearer insight into their *character* and their *capacity*. If they apprehend that by all this foolish and unworthy abuse, I shall be made to desist from bringing their doctrines under the *review* of the public, they greatly mistake. But why should these exasperated PRIESTS thus supply evidence against themselves? In the transport of their rage, they appear to have thrown away their reason.

"When some home stroke has reach'd their *solemn* souls,
In vengeance they determine—to *be* FOOLS."

† Eclectic Review for May.

Among the earliest attendants at the Auction, a SAILOR is made to appear, and such language is put into his mouth, as may best serve to degrade in the estimation of the seamen of the British Navy, those whom the government of the country have appointed to cherish in them a respect for religion, and to keep alive the energies of conscience and moral feeling. The dialogue between him and the AUCTIONEER runs thus:

“*Auc.* I suppose your captain wants a CHAPLAIN, out of some of THESE REVEREND GENTLEMEN, that are to be disposed of.

“*Sailor.* The Devil a bit for that, Master Auctioneer. OUR CAPTAIN HAS MORE REGARD TO THE MORALS OF THE SHIP’S CREW, than to take another CHAPLAIN on board.

“*Auc.* Why to be sure, Jack, your chaplain could not be so bad as all that, to MAKE EVEN SAILORS WORSE THAN HE FOUND THEM.

“*Sailor.* Why every sailor on board will be crying, THAT IF ANY WISHED TO GO TO HELL FIRST AND FOREMOST, he would have nothing to do but TO FOLLOW THE PARSON;

for he would be sure to BE DRUNK THE FIRST OF ANY OF THE MESS, and then he would run on with such a jaw, and SWEAR LIKE THE DEVIL; OUR CAPTAIN WAS OBLIGED TO KICK HIM TWICE OUT OF THE CABIN FOR HIS IMPUDENCE *.”

Can any thinking man doubt for a moment, the effect that is meant to be produced, and that must be produced, when such tracts are put into the hands of the crowd? These new EVANGELISTS, we see, omit no pains to eradicate from the minds of all to whom they gain access, whatever of affection or respect they might cherish for the clergy of the establishment; they spare no effort to induce them to forsake its teachers, and to enlist under the NEW SPIRITUAL POWER by which, at present that establishment is OVERSHADOWED and by which, at a period perhaps not very far distant, it may be OVERWHELMED.

It would be, one should think, one of the most earnest wishes of every friend to his

* SCRIPTURAL CHARACTERISTICS, represented in an account of a most curious Sale of Curates by Public Action, &c. delivered in the similitude of a DREAM, by an Old Observer. p. 28.

country, to strengthen the ties of amity between its brave defenders, and those whom the state has appointed to be their instructors. For unless there exist a spirit of respect and kindness towards those by whose exhortations they are to be kept faithful to their duty to God and man, they will never imbibe those principles of practical religion, which can alone produce that moral subordination of the heart, which is the basis of all genuine allegiance to the sovereign or to the state. & A greater calamity could not befall the public than that complete alienation of our seamen from their religious teachers which is here attempted,—and attempted too, by an *evangelical* preacher!! For by one of this stamp it is that the NATIONAL CHURCH is thus held up to mockery and scorn.

After the dismissal of DOCTOR FLESH-AND-BLOOD and Mr. SKINFLINT, the former painted as a sensual and profligate Drunkard, the latter as a mean and contemptible Miser; Mr. LEAD-HEAD is brought to the hammer,

and the contemptible description which he is made to give of himself, may be collected from the following address made to him by the Auctioneer.

“*Auc.* Upon my word, sir, by your own account of yourself you must be one of the cleverest *spiritual* JACK-A-DANDYS of the age ; though I must honestly confess, I am heartily glad as it respects the trade of *parsoning*, you are *not likely to be wanted in that occupation much longer*, especially as you have had no better education than what you got from the famous Doctor Sounding-brass, and his *most insignificant curate* Mr. Tinkler*.”

It is most assuredly a prediction that may in all likelihood be verified, that the regular clergy of this kingdom “ARE NOT LIKELY TO BE WANTED IN THEIR OCCUPATION MUCH LONGER,” if the indignant zeal of the multitude against them, bears any proportion to the efforts made to excite it. Their season of adversity is not far off, if such attempts to alienate

* Scriptural Characteristics, &c. p. 40.

from them the affections of all by whom they have been hitherto esteemed and respected, is to go forth into every corner of the kingdom ; and to be followed up by an unceasing labour to draw aside their followers to the conventicle.

Mr. WANTON, a RECTOR, is next brought forward. ROWLAND HILL, we find, is not a little indebted to the Pilgrim's Progress for his nomenclature ; it is from that *propria quæ maribus* that he has furnished himself with his appellatives of degradation.

“The auctioneer,” we are told, “drew out of this WRETCHED CREATURE, such a DREADFUL long story of his MOST VILE AND WANTON CONDUCT ; attended also with such a detail of different promises of marriage, only made FOR THE BASEST PURPOSES, and afterwards as CRUELLY VIOLATED, as were too SHOCKING and INDECENT to relate.”—The reader being thus left to figure to his imagination a character the most profligate, licentious, and abandoned ; and to cast this character so formed, at random, among the

clergy. The dialogue—the drift of which may be easily seen—proceeds thus :

“ *Auc.* I don’t wonder that you are ashamed to go back again to your living, as you lived there before till you could reside among them no longer. I am afraid you will make a sad hand of it in driving the *methodists* and dissenters out of your parish. Have you plenty of these sort of people ?

“ *Wanton.* O yes, they swarm in every corner of the parish ; and an audacious set they are as ever you met with. Some of them had impudence enough to write up in *large letters*, and *paste it against the church doors*, WHOREMONGERS AND ADULTERERS GOD WILL JUDGE, and this was done on a *Sunday morning* when *all the people were going to church.*”

After thus suggesting this most infamous scheme of slander, by way of instruction to the *methodists*, who may be supposed not sufficiently expert in devising new modes of contumely, this EVANGELIST proceeds in the assumed character of the Auctioneer, to give

to a libel thus dark and detestable, the encouraging fiat of his approbation.

“ *Auc.* : Indeed, *reverend sir*, IF I MAY SPEAK MY MIND, I THINK THEY SERVED YOU VERY RIGHT, for in my opinion, *much more mischief is done in attempting to cover and connive at such* ABOMINABLE EVILS AMONG THE CLERGY, or among any other sectaries bearing the Christian name, than by *exposing them to shame, if they have any shame in them* *.”

We may remember that previously to the destruction of the clergy of France, and the confiscation of their property, the minds of the multitude were thoroughly heated against them; and this effect once produced, it became no difficult matter for their enemies to find a pretext for the spoliation and plunder of an order of persons thus held up as scandalously disgracing their sacred function. Are we of this country, foolish enough, or thoughtless enough, not to foresee that the same unequivocal and unqualified charges of abuse and

* Scriptural Characteristics, &c. p. 46.

corruption, will eventually lead to similar consequences.

When this picture of the established clergy of England, shall have become familiar to the great mass of the people,—when this reiterated representation shall once get, as by degrees it will, complete possession of their minds,—the NATIONAL CHURCH, will become in their eyes no better than an AUGEAN STABLE, and they will soon come to look upon it as a nuisance to be removed.—What we shall have erected in its stead, the EVANGELICAL DIRECTORY, for the time being, will decide.

This kind of abuse and defamation is well suited to the meridian for which it is intended, it is well calculated to inflame the minds of the vulgar against the national church, and to league them against all preachers, in that church or out of it, by whom their fanatical errors are not embraced.

But while the portraits of the great body of the English clergy are thus painted, and hung up for public exhibition, what becomes

of the Dignitaries of that order ; are their features less dark, or their character less repulsive.—Not at all. But the libel against them required to be introduced with greater management.

“ A very grave, though cross looking creature, remarkably formal and precise both in his dress and behaviour, *with a vast deal of spiritual grimace*, quite a contrast to many who had appeared before him, was next told to come forward. (Doctor Sacheverell) *.”

This Doctor is introduced for the purpose of displaying an excessive and high-toned zeal in behalf of the head order of the clergy, and thereby to afford the “ Old Observer,” an opportunity of replying in such terms as may best serve to expose the *episcopal* authority to derision, and the office of *ordination* to contempt.

“ *Auc.* Doctor, before you begin upon others, may it not be necessary to look at home ? Have you no ignorance and folly to correct among yourselves ?

* p. 48.

“*Dr. Sach.* Supposing we have, sir, yet we know that *ours* is the true successional apostolic church; and it is impossible that the *ignorance and wickedness of her ministers* can invalidate the efficacy of her holy ordinances. We have no doubt but that her sacraments are equally efficacious whether they be administered by a priest that is as holy as an angel, or as wicked as a devil. No man can derive the powers of his priesthood from the holiness of his own life, *but from the power of THE BISHOP*, who upon the authority of his apostolical succession, alone confers the holy right. Sir, I’d have you to know, that it is impossible there can be a Christian Church, but as it is under the successional power of Christian Bishops.

“*Auc.* And pray, sir, what are we to reckon if these CHRISTIAN BISHOPS, *so called*, *have* NO MORE REAL RELIGION THAN IF THEY WERE HEATHEN PRIESTS.”

As the dialogue is managed by the “Old Observer,” Doctor Sacheverell admits the fact, that they are so unprincipled and pro-

fane, as to deserve the appellation of HEATHEN priests, but affirms that this charge, however well warranted, does not weaken their authority, or invalidate their claim. The "Old Observer" knew that if he could but impress the minds of the multitude with the belief that these CHRISTIAN BISHOPS, *so called*, were in fact no better than HEATHEN PRIESTS, he might safely leave the conclusion in their hands; and as to the mock defence of the ORDER of our clergy, by *Doctor Sacheverell*, it is so contrived as to insinuate the folly of preserving an authority so wilfully perverted, and so wickedly abused. Subscribing to the above accusation, therefore, the doctor is made to argue in this wise.—

"*Dr. Sach.* Sir, there can be no doubt but that their orders are equally valid; let their *lives* be ever so bad, their *office* is just the same. But God forbid that we should have many such *Christian* BISHOPS as these.

"*Auc.* So SAY I; but it was the opinion of one honest plain spoken bishop at the time of the reformation, that there were a

sufficient number of wicked unpreaching prelates in his day, to fill a gap in hell as wide as from DOVER to CALAIS.

“ *Dr. Sach.* No matter for that. I insist upon it, if *they are but* BISHOPS, that is quite enough; and as to myself, to speak out, I had rather receive my holy orders from the *wickedest* BISHOP upon the earth, than from the *most righteous* among the *schismatics* from our holy and apostolic church.

“ *Auc.* If he had been as *wicked* as THE RIGHT REVEREND FATHER IN GOD, *Bishop* JUDAS ISCARIOT, who *lost* HIS BISHOPRIC for selling his master, and afterwards was given over to hang himself. In my opinion, if you have not the honor of sainthood conferred upon you from the Holy Father who presides over that most ancient apostolical church, the Church of Rome, you are not rewarded by his holiness according to your deserts; especially for your very charitable doctrine, on sending at least one half of your Protestant Churches to the devil, because they are not headed by what you call your *successional* BISHOPS.

“ *Dr. Sach.* Sir, if it was not that I had to dispose of my curate, I would leave the room, as I fear your notions are dreadfully schismatical.

“ *Auc.* Only because I cannot speak so highly of your WICKED BISHOPS as yourself. Let them be but good bishops, and preach and pray and labour for the salvation of souls, and be instant in season and out of season, and thus make full proof of their ministry, and I shall have no more objection against the name and office of a bishop, than I have against the name and office of a king. But God bless his majesty I say, and may we never want a king in England, and so I suppose, a CHRISTIAN CHURCH MAY DO without your SUCCESSIONAL BISHOPS. Still God bless their lordships also, and long may they live, &c. &c. &c. *”

The multitude must take for granted that the “ Old Observer,” in thus passing judgment on the English Prelacy, is justified in so doing, by sufficient evidence and sound

* “ Spiritual Characteristics, &c.” p. 51, &c.

information. He is a GOSPEL preacher, and therefore cannot err from want of charity ! —He is an EVANGELIST, and cannot incur the guilt of slander ! His word, therefore, will pass current in the *new spiritual kingdom*, and his representation be received as the truth. If *hereafter*, they should rise in their wrath to subvert this order of HEATHEN PRIESTS, can we be at all surprized at the consequences of an indignation so *justly* excited ? Will their downfall deserve to be regretted ? Certainly not—A CHRISTIAN CHURCH MAY DO WITHOUT YOUR SUCCESSIONAL BISHOPS !!!

After the disappearance of Dr. Sacheverell, the curate Mr. PRETTYMAN, is introduced.—He is friendly to *the cause*, and *names* begin to *soften*.—By the relation which Mr. *Prettyman* is made to give, we learn that his Rector was sorely displeased with the *Methodists*, for their extraordinary devotion and piety, while he himself pays due homage to their *superior learning*, and their transcendent attainments in *theology*. The “Old Observer,” by the help of Mr. Prettyman, manages the matter

very much to their advantage in this respect; nor does he omit to pay a passing tribute to the blessed effect of the Village Sermons.

“*Prettyman.* When I saw them (the Methodists) the last time at the visitation, because they behaved civil to me, I thought it my duty to be civil to them in return; and they entered into some conversation about religion, and lent me some *very good sermons*, called VILLAGE SERMONS, written by a Mr. BURDER, and while I preached *these* to the congregation, *it is amazing how* THE METHODISTS began to crowd the church *.”

The tendency of these precious treasures of divinity, must sufficiently recommend them to the praise and patronage of the author of the “VILLAGE DIALOGUES.” He that has spared no pains to make the rising generation of ignorant and dissolute rustics laugh at what he terms the *white-wash* of MORALITY, and who, when their village curate exhorts them, if they have *faith* in the doctrine of a world to come, to add to it

* “Spiritual Characteristics, &c.” p. 58.

those *good-works* in which the sum and substance of religion consists, has led them to ridicule him as *chopping a new-fashioned logic**—He could not consistently, let slip any opportunity to extol his co-instructor.

Te multa prece, te prosequitur mero
Defuso pateris, et Laribus tuum
Miscet numen, uti Græcia Castoris
Et magni memor Herculis.

These brother-directors, who have conjointly struggled with so much activity and success to convert our villages from MORALITY to METHODISM, if they do not merit the thanks of the public, deserve at least, the praise of each other.

This reverend dreamer—to whom, in his visions, the regular clergy of this kingdom, appear so execrably profligate, and so destructively corrupt—brings next into his dormitory, “an angry looking *rector*, whose name was GRINDER.” He is made so to describe himself, as may lead us to conceive of the whole order, as one of which the country should be disburthened.

* Vide “Hints,” Part I. p. 64.

“ Pray,”—says the “ Old Observer,” addressing him in the representative character of *the Auctioneer*—“ pray did you ever attend to the solemn warning given in the 34th of Ezekiel, to shepherds of the same stamp, and the dreadful woes our Lord pronounced against the scribes and pharisees, *the REGULAR CLERGY of the day* *.”

In what manner this new spiritual republic,—when its system shall be fully matured, and its power properly organised,—will dispose of the REGULAR CLERGY, is matter of delicate discussion, but is not matter of very difficult prediction. When our minds become famaliarized to this representation of them, the rest will follow in its season. When the existence of any order in the state is rendered hateful to us, we are prepared to approve, and even to wish for ITS ABOLITION.

The rector presents his curate as one whom the *evangelical* Auctioneer may bring very successfully to the hammer.

“—If ever you have in hand more dirty work than common, let it rest with him, and I’ll assure you he’ll be the man for you.

“ *Mr. Quibble.* (to the curate) What then, had you no religious impressions when you took upon you your religious profession ?

“ *Curate.* Not I, no more than the *old covetous* BISHOP who ordained me *.—”

That this divine, so greatly revered in the wide circle of EVANGELICAL METHODISTS, purposes through the medium of all this calumny, to multiply their adherents, is sufficiently obvious. The tendency of all this detraction is to bring the church clergy into disrepute, to produce a general belief that there is no true piety out of a MEETING-HOUSE, nor any true religion where pure CALVINISM is not the profession of faith. We here see every feeling of candour, of truth, of charity, and of patriotism, sunk in the mean hypocrisy of a pretended attachment to the church, and an outside shew of zeal for religion and the gospel!—We see with what restless

* p. 77.

activity the new system is propagated in every part of the world!—Dreaming, and waking, this aspiring sect omit nothing that can increase their proselytes, and augment their power.

But their “DREAMS,” defamatory as they are, may teach us wisdom; for as the DOCTOR in MACBETH truly observes,

“INFECTED minds
To their deaf PILLOWS will discharge their secrets.”

And the same honest physician follows up his remark by advice, to which, while this NEW SPIRITUAL POWER is moving onward, we should do wisely to attend:

“LOOK AFTER HER;
REMOVE FROM HER THE MEANS OF ALL ANNOYANCE
AND STILL KEEP EYES UPON HER:—”

We know that for reasons of sound and salutary policy, our forefathers incorporated the clergy with the constitution: in framing a system of government, under which justice should be administered, they did not forget to provide for the *moral wants* of the people, and they thought it their duty to se-

cure to the state a permanent religious establishment for the common benefit of all who were born under it. They thought that in so doing they consulted our real interests, and provided for our real good. There is somewhat of defect or imperfection in whatever is modelled by the mind of man. In all human institutions, as in all human characters, there is room for great amendment. We are indebted greatly to those who suggest a cure for evils, which admit of cure ; and next to them, we are indebted to those who teach us to bear with what we cannot remedy.

But to those who with malicious zeal, vilify and defame the ecclesiastical establishment of their country, by libelling indiscriminately the conduct, and blasting without exception the character, of all its members :—Where is their “ commission from above,” for such a proceeding. What must we think when we behold “ a minister of the altar,” striving to provoke a spirit of disgust and hatred toward those appointed to officiate in the religious concerns of the com-

munity, and struggling to withdraw from them all that reverence, which is essential to their utility, and wholly to alienate the minds of the people from those, to whom, by all the ties of social and moral kindred, they ought to be most connected and most attached. A common libel, from an obscure and disaffected individual, might pass unheeded. But here it is not so—the minds of the multitude, are for the greater part, in the hands, and under the controul, of this new sect. The influence of its leaders secures the operation of the principles they inculcate. When therefore, these new spiritual directors spread throughout the extent of their dominion, a spirit hostile to the Clergy of the Establishment, the effect is as sure as the evil is incalculable.

The “Old Observer” lets slip somewhat of that secret which the future will more fully reveal.

“*Auc.* Well, well, if the bad state of the patronage of the church *does not prove its destruction*, I SHALL WONDER; we well know what a horrid mess they have made

of religion, in FRANCE ; and I am sure WE ARE GOING AFTER THEM AS FAST AS WE CAN *.”

It requires no very strong-sighted mind to discover the drift of all this. The plain insinuation is, that unless *the patronage of the church* is extended to the CALVINISTIC METHODISTS, to the exclusion of the REGULAR CLERGY,—whom this evangelical libeller in another of his popular works, affirms to be “REGULARLY wicked †,”—we of this kingdom, shall one day witness the downfall of the established church. I hope and trust, that we shall not, like France, become the deluded instruments of our own ruin ; but, “THAT WE ARE GOING AFTER THEM AS FAST AS WE CAN,” is a confession, in which, however unguarded it may be, there is but too much truth.

Surely, surely, before this period can arrive, reflection will find its way to the heads of all honest men!—Listen to the intolerant language which these sectaries hold forth to

* Spiritual Characteristics, &c. p. 79.

† *Village Dialogues*, by ROWLAND HILL, A. M. v. 4. p. 174.

all who refuse subscription to their creed. Look to the style in which they reply to such as differ from them in doctrine. It exhibits a compound of the most bigotted ignorance blended with the fiercest fanaticism. It is easy to perceive, that whenever this power shall be fully organised, the PAPAL AUTHORITY will return upon us in the guise of an EVANGELICAL PRIESTHOOD.

With respect to the effect produced on the popular mind, by the endless circulation of tracts aspersing the credit and character of the REGULAR CLERGY in every quarter of the kingdom—it is a conduct, which, let the avowed motive be what it may, deserves to be arraigned as a treasonable attempt to subvert that ORDER. It is a procedure that requires no comment—it explains itself.

This “Old Observer,” does not omit to close his dream by introducing “a methodist preacher,” under the *prepossessing* name of Mr. GOODMAN. This “EVANGELICAL minister,” is to be parted with at the auction. But his *dear hearers* are made to entreat the Lord on their own behalf for

his continuance amongst them; they were all ignorant of the GOSPEL till he came, and how can they part with him!!! The GOODMAN resolves and relents. The SAINTS in their turn bemoan and beseech.

“GOODMAN. I am too hard pressed. I dare not give an answer. If I were to continue with you, what could I do more than give you my best advice, and exhort you from house to house.

“*Mr Hearty.* It will be our fault if you can do no more than that. WHILE WE HAVE MONEY IN OUR POCKETS and zeal in our hearts, if you are turned out of one place, we may easily provide you with another *.”

Dear Mr. Goodman is then reminded of the “blessed effects produced by his ministry amongst them;” of his *instantaneous* conversion of JOHN ANVIL the blacksmith, “one of the completest brutes that ever lived,” by *a single sermon* which cut him to the heart; in a word, the methodist preacher is described as a paragon of SAINTS. And the “Old Observer” himself, in a tone of in-

* p. 95.

dignant and bitter regret, proceeds to exclaim,

“ How lamentable that SUCH MINISTERS AS THESE should be nick-named and abhorred, and thrust into holes and corners, while the WICKED and the VILE are sought after, and PROMOTED IN THEIR STEAD *!! ”

Or, in plain English, how lamentable it is that the methodistic preachers of the doctrines of Calvinism, should not obtain all church preferment to the utter exclusion of such *wicked* and *vile* clergymen of the establishment as enforce the MORAL DUTIES, and proclaim the MORAL TRUTHS of Christianity.

The doctrinal methodist is represented as the only FAITHFUL preacher, and miraculous conversions as never manifested but in some congregation of this class.

“ *Old Observer.* IT NEVER YET WAS KNOWN that GOD ever gave such SIGNAL TOKENS of his divine favour, but where the gospel is faithfully and affectionately *preached*, and applied to the souls of men.

* “ *Trueman.* TRUE, sir, for Mr. DECENCY,

who was our minister *formerly*, was a gentleman of a *very* EXCELLENT CHARACTER IN EVERY POINT OF VIEW, but would be frequently lamenting that he could do little or no good, though he aimed at it to the utmost of his power; still the church IN HIS DAYS was but THINLY attended, *and no wonder at it*, for while HIS LIFE WAS PERFECTLY CORRECT, and the MORALITY he preached VERY STRICT, yet *the glorious truths* of the *gospel* were not brought forward in that full and decided manner, so as to render them in the hands of the divine spirit, the power of God unto the salvation of the souls of men."

Here we have it most plainly taught that the Almighty neither assists nor favours the endeavour of the true Christian to contribute to the *moral* perfection of his creatures! He gives *no tokens of his divine favour*, where the minister exemplified in his life that moral obedience to the precepts of that religion which he earnestly preached and strictly enjoined. That God it seems whose attribute is *righteousness*, abandons such ministers

and those who attend upon them, and, influenced only by a love for the creed of methodism confines his *divine favour* to such only as are assembled to hear *their* doctrines delivered.

Can any proposition be more flagrantly profane?—Can any representation be more deceitfully false?—Yet all this perversion must Christianity submit to, that MORALITY and its preachers may be degraded, and METHODISM may win converts and establish its throne in triumph.

The probable end of all this deserves to be considered wisely and soberly. While these *pure patriots* send forth their *dreams*, it is fit that the public should be AWAKE. They have a matchless fertility of invention, but their *nocturnal visions* are full of instruction. The following is of a singular and portentous cast. It is meant no doubt, to be delivered as prophetic. More of abstract iniquity, in giving to a wilful and fabricated lie, the shape of a miraculous manifestation from heaven, was I think, never before put upon record. It is the serious

and solemnly attested *experience* of a PREACHER of the new CHURCH MILITANT by which he was first warned to forsake the establishment.

—“ For some time I was much perplexed concerning the lawfulness of attending places of worship where the ministers were wicked in life, or erroneous in doctrine. This was the case at the places where I sometimes attended. After much reading, conversation, and PRAYER, on the subject, *I was satisfied by the following* DREAM. I dreamed I was AT CHURCH attending divine service, the minister was reading the litany ; a sudden noise caught my attention, and looking towards the place where it proceeded, I saw A PERSON OF BRIGHT APPEARANCE, who beckoned me with his hand. I followed him ; he led me to the back part of the church, and descended with me down a number of steps into a cellar under ground. It seemed AS IF THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE CHURCH WERE REMOVED, and THE SUPERSTRUCTURE UPON PILLARS OF WOOD WHICH WERE WORM-EATEN AND ROTTEN. I was much astonished ; MY GUIDE observing me, said, “ YOU SEE

THE SITUATION OF THIS FOUNDATION;" and then, pointing to the place by which we entered, said, "ESCAPE!"—I DID SO, and suddenly AWOKE.—THIS, and a thousand circumstances which have since happened, have satisfied me, that it is inexpedient for me to attend any place of worship where THE GOSPEL IS NOT PREACHED. But I condemn no man in this matter*."

They know little of human nature, who do not know that such representations as these produce a powerful effect upon the ignorant, who are always prone to superstition, and whose minds are strongly arrested by the marvellous. When they are made to behold *the church* thus ARRAIGNED BY THE ALMIGHTY HIMSELF, who vouchsafes in answer to the *prayer* of this GOSPEL minister, to warn him in a dream to separate himself from it, at the same time that he discovers to him its tottering and ruinous condition, they will not only be disposed

* EXPERIENCE of RICHARD ELLIOT, a METHODIST PREACHER, published in the METHODIST MAGAZINE for 1796, page 575.

to benefit in good time by this MIRACULOUS ADMONITION, but they will learn to look with awe and reverence upon that MINISTER in whose favour the LORD so *graciously* interfered.

Leaving for the present, the instruction imparted to us in dreams, and the *similitude* of dreams, let us turn our attention to a subject, which, at this eventful moment, cannot engage the public notice too strongly, or detain it too seriously. This NEW CHURCH, in the plenitude of its authority, has publicly sent an *Inquisition* to IRELAND, to examine and report the state of its RELIGION, preparatory to the introduction of a RADICAL REFORM. The result of their mission is presented to the public under the title of a "Report of a DEPUTATION from the HIBERNIAN SOCIETY, respecting the RELIGIOUS STATE of IRELAND *."

* The following MINISTERS and GENTLEMEN, are stated at the end of this Report, to be the COMMITTEE until the next annual meeting.

REV. GEORGE BURDER REV. W. B. COLLYER
— JOHN CLAYTON, Sen. — ROWLAND HILL

By what authority, may we take leave to ask, are these inquiries prosecuted, and under what sanction are these measures concerted? These COMMITTEES OF RESEARCH, I must confess, appear to me as unconstitutional in their nature, as they are dangerous in their tendency. I had hoped that the whole race of ecclesiastical Inquisitors had been quiet in their graves. What has this self-constituted junto of busy, meddling, restless, Priests, what have they to do with the religious state of Ireland, or with the private religious opinions of any one individual in it? Do these officious zealots, bloated with vanity, do they fancy that all are in darkness but themselves, that they are thus run-

REV. JOSEPH HUGHES

— JOHN TOWNSEND

— MATTHEW WILKS

Messrs. Alderman Lea

William Alers

Joseph Bunnell

Robert Butcher

Henry Dobbs

John Fenn

Joseph Hardcastle

Sam. Hollingsworth

William Lane

Messrs. Alexander Maitland

George Meyer

William Shrubsole

Robert Steven

Thomas Stiff

Joseph Farn

Francis Weybridge.

The Rev. JOHN CAMPBELL,

Shacklewell, near London,

Secretary.

Mr. John Neale, Assistant

Secretary and Collector.

ning about with their farthing candle, to enlighten the world?—The absurdity of the scene would excite laughter, if the mischief of it did not make it serious.

Let us mark the line of labour which the members of this evangelic Deputation have chalked out, as prefatory to their future exertions.—

“They will go—intent upon *doing justice to their opportunities*. They will *feel themselves pledged* to devote every day of absence in a manner *pointedly* conducive to the *spiritual* welfare of the sister island. They will *visit many places*, confer with a variety of individuals, and *notice*, with united care and candour, *the state of all religious denominations*. Accumulating such testimonies as agree, and balancing such as are discordant, they will endeavour to form just conclusions, so that *the committee* WITHOUT ANY FURTHER APPEAL, will, in *abundance of cases*, know when to hesitate, and *when to* DECIDE, where TO EXERT THEMSELVES, and where to be still*.”

* See Report of the Hibernian Society, p. 1—2,

What power do these spiritual directors calculate to have under their command, that they talk so confidently of *deciding without appeal*, and *exerting themselves*, when in their judgment, the exertion of their power shall be necessary? It becomes prudent to look at the length of the muster-roll of the saints, when they thus assume to themselves an authority which the provident constitution of this country has hitherto confined to the *executive magistracy*. The recognised principles of freedom, neither justify nor suffer this kind of active interference. To me it appears the most haughty and insolent intrusion into the religious circles of domestic life, that we have ever witnessed. Assuming the name, style, and title of the HIBERNIAN SOCIETY, they announce themselves with as much assurance, and reveal their intentions with an air as magisterial, as if they were the plenipotentaries of the spiritual kingdom. The Legates of the Pope, in the meridian of his supremacy, never adopted a tone more peremptory, or proclaimed their commission in terms more decisive.

We next find announced, in solemn form, whom it is that the committee have been graciously pleased to appoint as spiritual inspectors of the sister kingdom.

“The proposal,” we are told, “respecting a deputation, having been acceded to, the following persons were charged with the execution of it.—S. Mills, Esq. of London, Treasurer to the Society; Rev. D. Bogue, of Gosport; Rev. T. Charles, of Bala; and Rev. T. Hughes, of Battersea * ”

With what talents these reverend *chevaliers* are furnished, that have thus marched forth in array, to combat the errors of the catholic faith, we are not informed. Whether they carry with them any other, or better, qualifications than bigotry and intolerance, the public have not hitherto had the means of knowing. That, as far as these requisites go, they are amply prepared, this report bears full testimony.

These new reformers preface the account of their route, with a pious hope that their

* Report, &c. p. 3.

exertions may not outstrip the provisions made for their support; that the evangelical *exchequer* may be duly augmented,—and that the committee of *spiritual supply* may find their *ways and means* fully adequate to the magnitude of the service to which they are meant to be applied. “ While presenting an account of their excursion, and of its result on their own views and feelings, they flatter themselves that *the resources* of that society, on whose behalf they consented to travel, and now take the liberty to plead, will soon *be enlarged*, so as to bear some proportion to the excellence and *magnitude of its design* * ”

Whether the *Prime Minister* of the Hibernian Society, when he comes to open his *Irish budget*, will give satisfaction to the faithful, it is difficult to guess. The evangelical system of finance is extremely simple—it has but one principle,—it is comprehended in a single measure—*contribution*: but the collectors of it contrive to work so powerfully on the misguided zeal of the deluded tri-

* p. 3,

butaries, that their projects encounter no great obstacles. The machine which their joint labour sets a-going, seldom stops for want of grease to its wheels.

These evangelical Envoys open their circuit with sufficient pomp, and they divide their inquisitorial labours with due precision.

“ On Friday, July 31st” (says the report) “ they commenced their tour: Messrs. Bogue and Charles proposing to visit Athy, Castlecomber, Kilkenny, and Clonmell; while, for the sake of ENLARGING THE FIELD of OBSERVATION, Messrs. Mills and Hughes took the road through Wicklow, Arklow, Gorey, Fearn, Enniscorthy, and New Ross.”

What his majesty’s subjects in Ireland may think of the deputies of this *new convention*, sent to spy out the nakedness of their land, I do not know. But if this is to be the prelude to other Conventions of a similar nature, I am sure it cannot, on this side the water, be too seriously inspected, or too severely condemned. If his majesty’s *ministers* are to be held incompetent to pro-

vide for the interests, or to purify the principles, of the people, I trust the task will never be confided to the meddling zeal and stupid self-conceit of *ministers* of this description. If the legislature, to whose integrity and wisdom the constitution has alone consigned the religious concerns of the state, is to be held inadequate to the duty, I trust it will never be exercised by any new order of LORDS SPIRITUAL of which this Hibernian Inquisition furnishes so odious an example. The principle of such associations is irreconcilably hostile to the true interests of British freedom, even when best constituted, but when composed, as this is composed, the precedent is as alien to the spirit of the constitution, as it is insulting to the sense and independence of the people.

The tour through Ireland, as made by these eagle-eyed inspectors, was impetuous and rapid. They passed with abrupt flight over the land; but they speak, nevertheless, most decidedly on its fallen state, and descant at great length, on the heavy obstacles which obstruct its pace Zion-wards. These birds

of ill omen did but dip their sanctified wing beneath the surface, and with an intuitive glance they detected every spring which fed the stream of its corruption. They commenced their tour of observation on the thirty-first of July, and we learn that—"On Wednesday, August 19, the *deputation* returned, through Dundalk and Drogheda, to Dublin ; where they continued till Thursday, August 25, when HAVING PREVIOUSLY MADE ARRANGEMENTS RELATIVE TO THE OPERATIONS OF THE SOCIETY, they closed THEIR LABOURS in Ireland, and embarked for Holyhead *."

The singular and unprecedented embassy of these envoys-extraordinary, these *ministers plenipotentiary*, must naturally have produced a feeling of indignation as well as surprize, in the Catholic Clergy of Ireland. It must be galling to this class of men to be exposed to the taunts and insults of officious ignorance, and over-forward zeal ; and we have sufficient evidence in the report as

* Report, &c. p. 11.

published to the world by these deputy-evangelists, that these taunts and insults were scattered with unsparing profusion. It is the language of libel throughout. But we will presently resort to the Report itself; it will be edifying to observe with what unshrinking audacity these spiritual Spies come forward as public accusers.

Their proceedings, it seems, did not pass without exciting, as was very natural, the remark and animadversion of the Catholic body :—"The establishment," we are told, "of the Hibernian Society, recent as it is, has not escaped the notice of the Irish Catholics *." It was not likely that it should, and I trust moreover, that it will not escape notice on this side the water, and that allegations, which so strongly and so shamefully asperse, at this critical moment, the great mass of the population of Ireland, and hold up its clergy to scorn, will not be suffered to spread themselves in Reports presented to the public by any incorporated body of sec-

* Report, &c. p. 19.

tarians amongst us, whatever be their character, or however evangelic their pretensions. This is not a time to generate discord and disunion; this new spiritual power, composed as it is of active, imbecile, intrusive, zealots, err equally against the permanent interests of their country, and the principles of true Christianity, when they thus ignorantly tamper with the prejudices of an irritated people, and busy themselves with affairs with which nothing but that restless vanity, which is always blind to the consequences of its own rashness, could ever prompt them to intermeddle.

The following are among many specimens of the magisterial mode in which they publicly pronounce judgment on the Catholic character.

“ It will inevitably occur,” says the Report, “ to any serious Protestant who makes a progress through Ireland, that the laity *have been most dreadfully imposed on, as it respects the perusal of the scriptures*, so that under an apprehension of their not being qualified for a practice, which is stated to

be, in the absence of the priest, pregnant with danger, thousands revolt from the recommendation, as they would from the recommendation of a *pestilential atmosphere*. IGNORANCE, is indeed, the mother of *their* devotion; ABSURDITY is *their chosen element*, and they are the *blind followers* of those, whom it requires a stretch of charity to pronounce *merely blind**.”

This evangelical imputation as usual, is gratuitous. It is sent forth to the public wholly unsupported by any shadow of proof. The offensive language of the missionaries of the new *faith*, is the direct reverse of that in which the mild system of genuine Christianity recommends itself to its votaries. This report, which these new gospel divines have thought fit to present to the world, is a performance which places their intellectual habits and character in an interesting light. It is on more accounts than one, deserving our grave and reflective perusal.

Let us again hearken to the saintly tone

* Report, &c. p. 21.

in which the Methodist ELECT hurl forth their evangelical philippics.

“ The *great body of the Irish* wander like sheep that have no *faithful* shepherd to lead them. Legendary tales, pilgrimages, penances, superstitious offerings, PRIESTLY DOMINATION, THE NOTORIOUS HABIT OF RECONCILING SANCTIMONIOUS ACCENTS AND ATTITUDES *with* ABANDONED PRACTICES, *and all that* SHOCKS *and* DISGUSTS in THE MUMMERY OF THE MASS-HOUSE, cannot fail to fix a mournful sentiment in the heart of every enlightened and pious observer *.”

No doubt these gospel tourists aspire to the praise of being faithful historians. If it be so, they have obtained a vast fund of melancholy information at a very small expence of time and labour. But this broad charcoal sketch of the Catholic church, will I am afraid, not be very acceptable to that great body who must be presumed to have sit for it. This reprobate picture of an Irish group, though warm from the evangelic easel, will

* Report, &c. p. 23.

even disgust by its distorted features and unnatural colouring, those who stand at such a distance from it as to view it in its best style of effect. It may, indeed, suit their own religious taste. Such a painting may serve as an altar-piece to *their* communion, but elsewhere even Bigotry herself must blush to contemplate it.

We have here a specimen of the temper and spirit of these new spiritual reformers, who are about to evangelize the world. Such are the new torch-bearers who are to go before us amid the sad eclipse which MORALITY and CARNAL REASON have spread over the earth. It is the rays of their link we are to receive as the "light of life." But it seems these *illuminati* see nothing in Ireland but a dense medium by which these rays are liable to be perpetually refracted, and they sum up this cause of grief and discouragement in the following lofty strain of animadversion.

—"On the whole, **POPERY** appears to be exhibited and inculcated there (as it probably is in every country where it obtains

a footing) with such a decided partiality in favour of its most *fantastic* and *anti-christian* feature—the MANOUVRES of its PRIESTS ARE SO VARIOUS, SO SUBTLE, and ALAS! so EFFICIENT—and the moral aspect, from these and other causes, is so discouraging, that the DEPUTATION, *confining themselves to this view of IRELAND*, see nothing but *formidable barriers erected against every attempt to bless her inhabitants WITH THE LIGHT OF LIFE; NOR, must it be concealed*, that the numeral predominance of Roman Catholics is ITSELF a prolific seed of DISUNION, not to say, POLITICAL DISAFFECTION.”

Really, these evangelical accusers appear to conceive themselves entitled to trample the qualities of truth, liberality, and Christian candour under their feet. But I trust the Catholics of Ireland,—if any among them deign to notice the report as given to the public by this self-constituted COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY—I trust they will do themselves the justice to believe that such extravagant and ill-founded aspersions are treated by all considerate and thinking persons in this part

of the United Kingdom, with the contempt they deserve. That this HIBERNIAN SOCIETY receives no public countenance, but on the contrary, is held to originate in a convocation of fanatics possessing, as is usual with persons of this cast, more zeal than prudence, and more pride than piety.

The religious faith of the Catholic contains much that a more enlightened reason would rectify, and much that a more sound, extensive, unprejudiced enquiry would remove. But viewed as mere matter of policy, nothing could be more preposterous than thus to insult the feelings, and rouse the resentment of a people, amongst whom they are about to introduce themselves, and whom, of course, it behoved them to conciliate, by a spirit of forbearance and moderation.

This deliberative assembly tell us,—and that in language that betrays not a little what at the bottom is their true character—the effect which this new spiritual order in the state is to accomplish. They proclaim,

in a tone of superlative self-importance, the manner in which this new spiritual dominion is to conduct itself, and what it must become in order to reach its real aim. The whole is summed up in the following laconic, but peremptory and singular description.

—“ In a word, they must be such, in their doctrine and manner of life, as bigots, formalists, and hirelings, *whether* POPISH or PROTESTANT, ASSAIL *yet* FEAR—DISDAIN *yet* ENVY—calumniate, yet inwardly applaud *.”

How shall we *decypher* all this!!! This *new spiritual government* is certainly not meant to be administered with *weakness*, if this strange and striking result is meant to flow from it!! We are let a little into the secret as to the mode in which they are to prosecute, and the principles on which they are to conduct that *great change* which they are so strenuously busy in preparing. I think it at least not unfit that this secret—as far as we thus have it disclosed—should reach

* Report, &c. p. 29.

the legislative ear ; and that their proceedings—as far as they are known—should not escape the legislative eye.,

This new spiritual power is daily multiplying its leaders, and daily increasing its followers. Surely this public and perpetual encroachment on the rightful authority of the constitution, is not a thing to be encouraged by connivance. That the religion of a country should come gradually,—in the great mass of its population—into the hands of low, illiterate, intriguing cabals of enthusiasts and fanatics, is not an affair of slight moment. That this most important of all its concerns, should come, moreover, under the sway and management of persons professedly *dissenting* from its church establishment, and who deny, in doors and out of doors—in private and in public—from the press and from the pulpit—the intrinsic worth of *practical morality*, when compared with *their* system of *faith*,—teachers who disconnect and cut asunder all those ties which make the future happiness of men dependent on their compliance with those terms of the gospel

which they were created to fulfil, and on those conditions which they were created to obey. Teachers, in fact, who deceitfully assuming the sacred and high-sounding epithet of *evangelical*—as the Jesuits called themselves the disciples of Jesus—send forth into the remotest borders of the kingdom, doctrines as directly the reverse of scriptural truth, as they are subversive of all that moral goodness and practical virtue which it was the avowed and sole object of the great founder of Christianity to inculcate and enforce.

It is surely a most gross and glaring violation of that right of private judgment, and that freedom of religious inquiry, which the liberal spirit of the English Constitution imparts and secures to all. It is surely, a most illegal, as well as insulting, violation of the spirit of that constitution, that any class or order of men in the kingdom, should dare to erect themselves into a Society for the purpose of exterminating doctrines, which in *their* judgment, are unsound, and introducing—by means of agents and emissaries employed for that purpose—a certain system

of religious belief, which *they* arrogantly pronounce to be the only true faith. If those who assumed this sort of sovereignty, were men of vigorous intellect and profound learning, the evil—for it would even then be an evil—would be lessened. But when it consists, in the far greater part, of Blockheads, tainted with the *mania* of preaching, without a single requisite which should fit them for that high and important destination—who disdaining the usual means of acquiring a subsistence by honest industry, turn religion into a trade, and,—like the quack *professors* in other sciences,—live on that credulity of the ignorant, upon which impostors of every description for ever feed and fatten.—When we behold this new order of Ecclesiastics,—that thus obtrudes itself amongst us—consisting, not of an enlightened, liberal, well-educated, moderate clergy, diffusing by exhortation, and inculcating by example, the moral duties of life—but of a bloated race of LAY priests, propagating with importunate and unceasing zeal, doctrines drawn not from

that gospel which is the pure fountain of light and life, but from the absurd and irrational institutes of JOHN CALVIN, imbibed at second-hand from an ASSEMBLY'S Catechism—can we see this, and not ask ourselves, Are these upstart, untaught, mechanics, to be our dictators?!!—Are these foolish fanatics, who follow one another blindfold, are they to be our infallible guides?—Is it from such as these we are to beg the alms of our religious freedom, and “be made at once to FEAR and to ENVY?!!!”

To what climax of criminal stupidity must we arrive before we can contemplate such arrogance without contempt and indignation.

The following side-wind suggestions are in the true style—they are given with all the selfish cant and sanctified whine of the sect.

“It was stated to the deputation that several *curacies* could be obtained if such ministers were to offer. Cannot England spare a few of her young EVANGELISTS? Would not a few be willing to cross the

channel at their brethren's invitation? But how much more important to provide *apostolic* men with BENEFICES!! *”

Miracles of humility! Monuments of self-denial! Will none then step forward and give a theological lift to these holy apostles? Cruel neglect. Will none put the ladder of preferment to the foot of these pious evangelists? Shameful inattention. Shall such splendid talents and profound learning go unpatronized? Shall such immense services to religion and the state go unrewarded? Shall we not zealously co-operate in measures so well calculated to spread *morality* among the vicious in this country, and to strengthen the *union* with our catholic brethren in the sister kingdom? Can we be unconcerned to reward those who manifest so sincere and zealous an attachment to our national *church*, and so fervent an affection for the *moral* clergy of its establishment?! Can we fail to venerate the caution with which they guide themselves in the religious concerns

of the kingdom, the modest distrust which they express of their own judgment in matters of *faith*, and their ardent endeavours to render us a peculiar people zealous of *good works*?! Can we withhold our admiration from the earnestness with which they inculcate the moral duties which the gospel enjoins, and the zeal with which they enforce the *conditions* of salvation which that gospel contains? When we think on all this, and pause to count out its compensation, what are benefices!!! All reward so lags behind their deserving, that to provide these *apostolic men* with bishoprics, would leave them without their recompense.

This obscure Hibernian Society which seems to fancy itself entitled from its own spiritual importance, to cast its reproach in all directions, modestly presumes that if its efforts to regenerate Ireland should fail, the affair must necessarily be hopeless. Where it can do nothing, it supposes that nothing can be done. "If the means," we are told "proposed by the Hibernian Society, or if the united energies of Christians in Ireland had been long

employed, and, *after all*, the spiritual aspect of the country had been *what it now is*, there might have appeared reason for the apprehension *it was given up to judicial blindness, and that all endeavours to recover it would BE VAIN.* But this is not the case. That which occurs too often with regard to the physical soil of Ireland, occurs much oftener, and surely calls for louder lamentation, with regard to her moral soil.—The husbandmen are SHAMEFULLY NEGLIGENT. Preceding statements will shew that the Deputation have not overlooked the agreeable exceptions. But what are these, compared with the specimens of INATTENTION, INSUFFICIENCY, DISCORD, or LICENTIOUSNESS, *which, IN ONE DENOMINATION OR ANOTHER, becloud the scene, and prove that the OPPOSERS OF POPERY, as well as its ADVOCATES, should lie IN THE DUST OF HUMILIATION, COVERED WITH THEIR OWN REPROACHES *.*”

Wherefore all this personal imputation of base neglect and utter unworthiness? What

* Report, &c. p. 43.

overt acts do these bold accusers give in evidence to support their indictment? Is it upon the hearsay testimony of their three weeks tour, that they thus confidently turn *informers*, and warrant the publication of this their most singular, most novel, and most extraordinary Report? I most earnestly hope that this will be the last precedent of the kind that will be presented to the public. Ireland will certainly not be very sanguine in her hope of reformation from these new dispensers of *the light of life*, unless in future she finds them turn their own *lucid intervals* to better account.

In this Report even the Protestant Clergy of Ireland are indirectly stigmatized. But the plan to be pursued by these active Sectarians, as it respects the increase of their disciples in Ireland, and their projected attack on the Catholic persuasion—which they most offensively and invidiously term **POPERY**—is thus set forth—

—“ With regard to the *choice of stations*, it should be regulated, in a great degree, by the comparative prevalence of **POPERY**. In

several parts of the north, PROTESTANTS are the more numerous body. Now, whatever disadvantages some of *these* may lie under, they have the scriptures in their hands, and even where *they would have been perverted or grossly neglected by the ministers of their own parish or denomination*, they have, perhaps, a few associates who would be happy to afford them spiritual assistance, or they may have it in their power to attend *other ministers*, who would feed them with knowledge and understanding; so that if *they* are ignorant, it is far more probable than in the case of PAPISTS, that they are willingly ignorant. The most legitimate field of labour for the HIBERNIAN SOCIETY, is therefore, IN THE CONFESSED REGION OF POPERY, where there are few or no Protestants to shew the deluded multitude a more excellent way. Yet, there are unquestionably many places where *protestants* have been labouring for years, and *not quite* in vain, which on account of their vast population, may be resorted to by the AGENTS of the HIBERNIAN SOCIETY, nor will good sense or candour, suspect of hostility or illiberal com-

petition *. ON EVERY HAND the DETERMINATION should be, TO DETACH AS MANY AS POSSIBLE FROM THE FOLDS OF COUNTERFEIT SHEPHERDS, but not to diminish the flocks of the vigilant and faithful; *to make perpetual inroads on the kingdom of SATAN*, but by no means to disturb or divide *the family of JESUS CHRIST* †.”

Now there is no doubt but that in the opinion of these high-toned Evangelists,—for it must be remembered they are themselves to be the judges—all will be considered as *counterfeit* that are not of their *stamp*. Whatever does not come from the mint of CALVIN, will be considered as false coinage. It must bear his image and superscription, or it will be nailed to the counter to prevent its circulation. Who, may we ask, is to decide on the mode by which this *determination to detach* the different congregations from their ancient

* Surely not! Their language is so friendly! so conciliating! so palpably opposite to any thing like *hostility* or *competition*!!!

† Report, p. 51, &c.

pastors, is to be carried into effect? By what criterion are “the vigilant and faithful,” to be ascertained?—What facts are to be proved?—What evidence is to be produced?—Are all who subscribe to the same creed with the HIBERNIAN SOCIETY, to be included in the family of CHRIST, and the rest to be turned over to the kingdom of SATAN?—So it will be, and so it must be expected to be, for they have no other test of godliness but their own creed; this is the two-foot rule by which all must be measured, and they must come within the standard, or they will be thrust out from the circle of true believers.

May not the Catholic Clergy be excited to resent any clandestine spirit of intrigue by which their followers may be drawn aside. Is it not possible that even the multitude, whose earliest and strongest prejudices are on the side of their pastors, may be exasperated by the very attempt to seduce and disunite them. Has this Society, or its agents, calculated upon the consequences that may

follow from thus fomenting a spirit of discontent among his majesty's subjects in Ireland, by thus rudely rushing on their altar, and treating with contemptuous and indecent disrespect, all that they have been accustomed to honour and to venerate. I wish these Angels of *Light* had more of sound sense and civil prudence—they would certainly make better SUBJECTS, and I trust they would not make worse SAINTS.

The Judges in our courts of law, turn their backs against *hearsay evidence*; but in the SPIRITUAL COURT of this Hibernian Society, it is admitted with the greatest readiness, and acted upon with the utmost promptitude.

“As a subordinate measure, the SOCIETY *will find their account* in bearing the expences of other ministers inclined to visit places at a moderate distance from their settled charge, and it may be expedient to employ *a few* ITENARANTS, whose REPORTS, after they have *explored* the districts assigned them, may often supply the knowledge of important

facts, and *give rise to* ADVANTAGEOUS EXERTIONS *.”

But by what means is intelligence to be gained by these *Itinerants*, whom none will respect, and most will avoid—they must themselves depend on vulgar rumour, they must take their information as they receive it—distorted—misrepresented—or misconceived. One will tell them *this*, and another *that*, and they will *report*, what is reported to them, and these reported reports are to be made the ground of CORRESPONDENT EXERTIONS?!! If the Society will *find their account* in this sort of proceeding, I apprehend the advantage will be exclusively their own.

By what unheard of power, moreover, are these districts to be *explored*? By what recognized authority are these saintly inspectors to conduct their search? Under what constitutional commission are these spiritual judges to go their circuit.

Such Societies are pregnant with incalculable mischief. Those who enter into com-

* Report, &c. p. 53.

binations thus unconstitutional and impolitic, are guilty of a high breach of duty. They are guilty towards the King, who is at the head of the church,—they are guilty towards his subjects, of whose religion they thus insolently constitute themselves the dictators. All such interference in the internal affairs of any people, is not merely an atrocious infringement of their right of private judgment; it is a tacit libel on those to whom the conduct of public affairs is entrusted. Such confederacies, formed under the specious pretext of spreading the *true* gospel, is at once an abuse of its principles and a violation of its spirit. They cannot be too severely reprobated or too promptly repressed. Are REPORTS of this nature to be repeated? Are VISITATIONS of this description to be renewed? I trust this CONVENTION of divines will not again send forth their delegates to any class of his majesty's subjects, or into any district of his dominions; but if they should, that their proceedings would come under the cognizance of a different jurisdiction; if they feel themselves *justified* in thus setting the

principles of the constitution at defiance, I cannot dismiss the hope that instead of being suffered to insult the British public with their REPORTS, they will be made to enter their *justification* on another and a different RECORD.

The ASSOCIATIONS which are forming in EVERY COUNTY OF THE KINGDOM, wear an aspect not very favourable to that spirit of UNION which the religion of Christianity requires. It furnishes matter of grave deliberation when we read in the Monthly Report of the new CHURCH MILITANT, such intelligence as the following: it seems rather an extract from some MILITARY Chronicle, than from an EVANGELICAL Magazine.

“Sept. 9. The GLOUCESTERSHIRE ASSOCIATION met at Wotton-under-Ege.

“Sept. 15. The WILTS ASSOCIATION met at Devizes.

“May 28. The SOMERSET ASSOCIATION held their annual meeting at Yeovil.

“Sept. 16. The DORSET ASSOCIATION met at Dorchester.

“October. The BUCKINGHAMSHIRE ASSO-

CIATION met at Mr. Gardner's, Potter's Bury

“ Sept. 23. At Brigg, the Eighteenth General Meeting of the LINCOLNSHIRE ASSOCIATION.

“ Oct. 14. At Mr. Atkinson's, Margate, a meeting of the EAST KENT ASSOCIATION.

“ The SUSSEX ASSOCIATION was held at Heathfield, on the 28th and 29th May.

“ June 4. The BUCKINGHAM and BANBURY ASSOCIATION met at Mr. Fletcher's Meeting, Bicester

“ June 18. The DEVONSHIRE ASSOCIATION met at Axminster.

“ An ASSOCIATION hath been lately formed denominated ‘ The MIDDLESEX and HERTFORDSHIRE Union of Protestant *Dissenting* Ministers.’ Their first meeting is to be at Hertford, on the Wednesday after the first Sabbath in April, 1808. Mr. Whitefoot of Enfield, to preach on the nature, advantages, and best methods of conducting religious ASSOCIATIONS *.”

* Evangelical Magazine.

It would be superfluous to transcribe more of this kind of information. I believe there is not a single county in England, in which an association of this kind is not formed.

Whether those who are thus active throughout the kingdom in extending the line of religious *separation*, are actuated by any serious conviction of what is good for the community at large, or by an anxiety to augment their own influence, and concentrate their own power, is yet to be seen. It only remains at present to view all this in connection with a scheme at present in agitation—and a most important one it is—to give to the CONFEDERACIES of Methodism ONE COMMON CENTRE, and for that purpose to embody them all in ONE GRAND INCORPORATION, having its head-quarters in the METROPOLIS. The printed particulars of this last concerted project, are now lying before me*. It purports to be “AN ADDRESS to

* It is printed “by R. RUTT, Shacklewell,” but has NO PUBLISHER’S NAME. For the present it appears to be intended for circulation only among those concerned in effecting this GRAND JUNCTION. The scheme appears

the MINISTERS *and* CHURCHES *of the* CONGREGATIONAL ORDER,"—and the statement of THE PLAN divides itself into the following heads. "The TITLE to be assumed—The GENERAL PRINCIPLES to be acted upon—The OBJECTS to be obtained—The MEMBERS to be eligible—The plan of CORRESPONDENCE—and the scheme of FINANCE.

The NATIONAL CONVENTION of the NEW CHURCH, is to be distinguished by the following title :

"GENERAL UNION OF CONGREGATIONAL MINISTERS AND CHURCHES THROUGHOUT ENGLAND AND WALES."

The Members are to consist, it seems, of

to have been first planned about three years ago, and will be found reported in the EVANGELICAL MAGAZINE for February, 1806. "We," it is there said, "whose names are hereunto subscribed, agree to form ourselves into a *general body*, designated THE ASSOCIATE CONGREGATIONS, comprehending that *large body* of Christians throughout the United Kingdom, who are commonly called CALVINISTIC METHODISTS."

Then follows the list of the original PROJECTORS, in which we find the name of ROWLAND HILL.

“ **THE CONGREGATIONAL BOARD in London ***.”

“ **MINISTERS** who are acknowledged **MEMBERS OF ASSOCIATIONS** in the country, professing themselves **PROTESTANT DISSENTERS**, and **OF THE CONGREGATIONAL ORDER**, with **THEIR CHURCHES**.

“ Such **Congregational Ministers**, not belonging to **Associations**, but recommended by

* *The London Committee*, (which is to vary annually) consists of the following persons :

Rev. John Atkinson	Messrs. James Davies
Joseph Barber	George Dyson
Charles Buck	James Evans
GEORGE BURDER	Joseph Hardcastle
George Ford	Samuel Houston
Noah Hill	John Keylock
Thomas Hill	Joseph Lee
John Humphrys	Alexander Maitland
John Kello	Eben. Maitland
Samuel Palmer	Thomas Pellatt
John Townsend	Robert Stephen
Robert Winter	Joseph Stevenson
Messrs. William Alers	John Thomas
Josiah Banger	John Wesley
Joseph Bunnell	William Whitwell
Joseph Cecil	Thomas Wilson
Thomas Conder	Benjamin Wright

TREASURER—**Mr. Robert Steven.**

SECRETARIES—**Rev. John Kello. Rev. Thomas Hill.**

three neighbouring ministers; MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL UNION."

A GENERAL MEETING is to be held annually in LONDON, when a Sermon is to be preached on the occasion. And at this annual meeting, COMMITTEES, both in TOWN and COUNTRY, are to be chosen or approved, to conduct the business of the UNION.

Under the specious pretence of giving *spiritual advice*, a foundation is laid for interference in *temporal concerns*, and the way is paved for establishing gradually a dominion over the *property* as well as the *conscience* of mankind. One of the avowed OBJECTS of these United Brethren, who style themselves CALVINISTIC METHODISTS, is thus openly announced :

" Giving ADVICE, when advice is sought, respecting TRUST DEEDS and OTHER TEMPORALITIES, of ANY of the ASSOCIATED CONGREGATIONS, except in such cases as come within the province of the DEPUTIES."

What difficulties, some might ask, can occur in the disposition of property to render advice necessary ? This *new priesthood* could

tell them, *in confidence*, the emergencies which render it requisite. They could give them COUNSEL'S OPINION, that no DEVISE OF LAND, or of any thing chargeable upon, or out of land, can be made to any CHARITABLE USE; but they could tell them likewise, that the courts of law, with a nicety of construction which softens the watchful rigour of *mortmain*, have held * such devises good as APPOINTMENTS to CHARITABLE USES; they could inform them, moreover, of the restraints and limitations to which such devises are subjected by a particular Statute †; all which tends greatly to embarrass testamentary *donations* of this kind, and to render pastoral *advice* necessary in all the congregations of the county COMMITTEES in their respective districts, as well as by the GENERAL EXECUTIVE DIRECTORY under which the PROVINCIAL directories are to act, and into which they are to be incorporated ‡.

* Under the Stat. 43 Eliz. c. 4.

† 9 Geo. c. 36.

‡ The occasional necessity of *advice* respecting “ TRUST

But we find an exception to the exercise of this mediatorial power—"Except in such

DEEDS and OTHER TEMPORALITIES," the following case, among others, will sufficiently testify. It is, perhaps, familiar to the *Evangelical* PREACHER, if it is not, he will derive some information which will give the merit of legal accuracy to his future *advice*, on the point to which it relates.

"Doe, on the demise of PHILIPS, *v.* ALDRIDGE."

On the trial of this ejectment for a house and ground belonging to it, a verdict was taken for the plaintiff, subject to the opinion of the court on a case reserved. The plaintiff claimed as *heir at law*, the defendant was the devisee of W. Phillips, who devised thus—"To the *Rcv.* ADAM ALDRIDGE, late of Amesbury in Wiltshire, but now PREACHER at the MEETING-HOUSE at Lyndhurst, all, &c. &c. [describing the premises] to hold to him, the said ADAM ALDRIDGE, for and during his natural life only, on this express condition, that he do and shall without delay, after my decease, settle and convey the same to *trustees*, for the use and support of the preaching of the word of God at the MEETING-HOUSE at Lyndhurst, aforesaid, *for ever*; and in case such preaching should be discontinued, I direct the same to be applied towards a school for teaching the poor of Lyndhurst aforesaid, for ever, and I do give unto the said ADAM ALDRIDGE, full and absolute power and authority to settle the same accordingly." Then followed a bequest of money in the funds *to the same uses*, an additional legacy of 100*l.* to the PREACHER as EXECUTOR, and a bequest to him of the household furniture in the house in question for life, with a direction to settle the same to the use of succeeding ministers, to go as heir-looms.

cases as come within the province of the DEPUTIES.”—And we are referred to the

The testator then adds the following clause—“ And if it should happen that I have not left any of the afore-said legacies in a *legal* and *lawful manner*, to prevent any advantage being taken thereof, I do give, devise, and bequeath, such legacy or legacies unto the said ADAM ALDRIDGE and William Downer, (the preacher’s co-executor) in trust to be disposed of at *their* discretion FOR EVER.”

The COURT held clearly that the LIMITATIONS *subsequent to the preacher’s life estates* was VOID, but that the life estate was good.—Vide 4 *Term Reports*, 264.

This will appears to have been drawn by some such conveyancer as the CONGREGATIONAL UNION would be likely to furnish. It is a useful precedent, nevertheless, and may serve to regulate the *advice* of these sage instructors. The next time the statute is to be evaded, they will be more circumspect. Like ADAM, in the case before us, they will enjoy *the fruit* for their life, but they will be more attentive than *he* was to the interests of their POSTERITY.

As spiritual *advice* is not always at hand, the EVANGELICAL MAGAZINE, under the head of “RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE,” furnishes its readers with the following

“ FORM OF A *Legacy.*”

“ ITEM.—I A. B. do give and bequeath the sum of
unto THE TREASURER for the time being,
of a Society of Christians, called the ASSOCIATE CONGREGATIONS, including that large body of Christians throughout the United Kingdom, who have been commonly called CALVINISTIC METHODISTS, formed in London in

following *note* for information respecting the order of persons here alluded to.

“The DEPUTIES of the DISSENTING congregations in and about LONDON, FOR THE PROTECTION OF OUR CIVIL RIGHTS. An interesting account,” it is added, “of this HIGHLY USEFUL BODY, and of their ACTIVITY in THAT IMPORTANT DEPARTMENT, has been published, and should be in the possession of every DISSENTING minister.”

What! are then the LEGISLATURE and the LAWS so inadequate to the maintenance of the *civil rights* of the subject, that this NEW PRIESTHOOD must come forth in their defence? Are the TWELVE JUDGES so incompetent or so corrupt that a corps of CALVINISTIC METHODISTS must form themselves into a PROTECTORATE? Are these DEPUTY DEFENDERS OF THE FAITH to usurp the authority of magistrates, and invest themselves with the *power* to preserve those CIVIL RIGHTS

the year 1805: the same to be paid within months, next after my decease, out of my personal estate, and to be applied to the USES and PURPOSES of the aforesaid society.”—*Evan. Mag.* Feb. 1806.

against the violation of them on the part of the existing government, or the abandonment of them by the legal Tribunals of the kingdom; for it is only against the encroachment of the former, or the corruption of the latter, that the CIVIL RIGHTS of the community can need *protection* ?!!

Surely these “DEPUTIES of the DISSENTING CONGREGATIONS IN AND ABOUT LONDON,” are taking upon them weightier concerns than are consistent with their *holy function* ! If, indeed, the purport be to prepare the people to look to the NEW SPIRITUAL POWER for official vindication of their *civil rights*, in this case, the object is, to a certain extent, accomplished. But, most certainly, this, to say the least of it, is not the shape which RELIGION should assume in society. And those who are thus active in introducing into this country, such Committees, and Associations, and Conventions, as we are now adverting to, may be among the best friends and the foremost allies of CALVINISM, but they are among the worst and most dangerous enemies of the CONSTITUTION.

No one can hold in greater detestation, than I do, every species of persecution, on account of opinions. To attempt to extirpate error by the arm of force is as iniquitous as it is foolish. I trust those days are for ever gone by; and that we shall never strive to rectify the judgment of men by the violation of their rights. But there are wise and sound principles of policy, nevertheless, that justify vigilance, and that demand precaution on the part of government, when a NEW AND FORMIDABLE SPECIES OF POWER IS GROWING UP IN THE VERY HEART OF THE COUNTRY, full of a hot and ardent zeal for the propagation of principles, which in their effect go to shake the security of all *moral* society; and which *Power* is daily drawing to itself new accessions of support, and strengthening the cord of its separation from the National Church; on whose declension it is growing great, and whose adherents it spares no pains to alienate.—This is a subject of serious reflection, and ought to be a subject too of severe watchfulness.—The spiritual Leaders of this new republic have fully testified the spirit which they bear

towards all, who oppose that system of doctrine which they have taken upon themselves to propagate. What such opponents may expect when this order of Rulers shall have fully extended their dominion, and digested their system, persons of sufficient foresight may easily enough prophecy.

The mild and benevolent principles of the British Constitution tolerate—and most wisely,—all sects, and all systems of faith. But the day seems fast approaching, when the Church, established under that Constitution, shall, in its turn, *solicit* TOLERATION. The pure faith of CHRISTIANITY is hourly giving way to the mystic doctrines of CALVIN,—doctrines as absurd as they are impious, and as fatal as they are false. How long will this delusion last—and where will it end? This gigantic Coalition against the moral empire of the Gospel—where will it terminate?—It will terminate in this—

The nation will be plunged again into that thick gloom of bigotry, the fog of which is now gathering round it.—The ignorant multitude will gradually be brought under the sottish dominion of CALVINISTIC METHODISTS,

and the Church of England will either **EVEN-
TUALLY BE FILLED BY THAT ORDER**, or will fall before it.

These predictions may seem invidious and may sound severe—and were they unfortified by argument or unaccompanied by evidence,—they would be so. But the aspect of things demands that we should speak out. It is not a time for complimenting and coqueting. Elsewhere and at another period, these may be suitable,—but here, and at this crisis, they would be sadly out of season.—It is wise to take precaution while the wind whispers, it may be too late when it roars.

END OF THE SECOND PART.

H I N T S
TO THE
PUBLIC AND THE LEGISLATURE,
ON THE
NATURE AND EFFECT
OF
Evangelical Preaching.

BY A BARRISTER.

PART THE THIRD.

“Alarm some men—you do not drive them to provide for their security, you put them to a stand; you induce them, not to take measures to prevent the approach of danger, but to remove so unpleasant an idea from their minds; you persuade them to remain as they are, from a new fear that their activity may bring on the apprehended mischief before its time.—But the few to whom I wish to submit my thoughts are of a character which will enable them to see danger without astonishment, and to provide against it without perplexity.”

BURKE'S Thoughts on French Affairs.

London :

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TEMPLE-BAR: AND SHERWOOD, NEELY, AND
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1809.

Printed by W. Clowes, Northumberland-court, Strand.

H I N T S

TO THE

PUBLIC AND THE LEGISLATURE.

H I N T S,

&c.

WHETHER it is to be ascribed to the cunning of the interested, practising on the simplicity of the credulous, or to whatever other cause it is owing, certain it is that the multitude have ever manifested more eagerness to embrace the reveries of human weakness than the revelations of Eternal Wisdom. The same perverseness of mind is manifested in other matters not connected with religion. The nostrum of the Mountebank will be preferred to the prescription of the regular Practitioner. Why is this? Because there is something in the authoritative arrogance of the pretender

by which ignorance is overawed. The same thing happens in the concerns of kingdoms and commonwealths ; the perilous, but imposing, novelties of political theorists, seduce the veneration of the crowd from the comparatively cold principles of rational freedom. In each case, the result is similar. The Quack physics us into distemper, and the Projector reforms us into ruin.—What the new fraternity of ANTI-MORALISTS will accomplish, and into what high-road of evil they will carry their followers, remains to be seen ; and into what vortex those who are not their followers will be swept by the strength of the current—this remains to be seen also.

Considerate men, now numbered with the dead—for I advert to the days of our fathers—considerate men, sanguine in their hopes from the progressive advancement of the human mind, anticipated the happiest result in the diffusion of social benevolence, and the growth of practical virtue. Tracing the meliorating influence of religion, from its first break of morning light to the then period of its rise, they indulged the most gratifying predictions from

the wisdom of those who were to come after them. The philosophic vision of future years floated on their fancy, and they rejoiced. But how far,—how very far,—is this augury from its fulfilment! Could these patriots—the worthiest in the train of our ancestry—could they have predicted—surely they could not—that, at an era to which they looked forward with such prophetic exultation, we, their descendants, instead of moving onwards towards the meridian of reason and truth, should be fast declining into the thick gloom of ignorance and fanaticism?—Deplorable as this consideration may be, it comes but too near reality. That high-strung vigour of intellect, which once promised so much to the future, seems paralyzed and inert. The multitude appear to be drawn aside from the protection of their rightful leaders. The contagion of bigotry—daily extending itself—has dwarfed in its progress all the natural dimensions of the popular mind. Rational devotion,—in its principles and in its practice the summit of all earthly wisdom,—is hourly disappearing before that outward sanctity which apes the

form of religion without conforming to its spirit, and wears its livery without yielding to its commands.

We seem to live in a new era.—We have been left, it should seem, hitherto without the rudiments of a Christian education. Under the tuition of a *moral* Clergy, the importance of personal holiness, and the certainty of a judgment to come, has been the substance of all the religious teaching we have received. A new race of Divinity-tutors, rising, as it were, out of the ashes of their own corruption, have started up, professing themselves to be the only true interpreters between God and man, and, announcing themselves as EVANGELISTS, demand that we should put our conscience into their custody, and, with all due humility, repeat their catechism and receive their creed.

In France, the Jacobin ringleaders of the Revolution, the better to win over the prejudices of the people, assumed the names of the most virtuous and disinterested of the Roman republicans ; the names of BRUTUS, CASSIUS, GRACCHUS, rung in the ears of the

unthinking mob, who readily gave the Impostors credit for the patriotism which their titles announced. The natural good sense of mankind has always been abused, and their judgment thrown off its guard, by names and titles. Who could fear despotism under the government of a *Protector*? Who could suspect that the lust of temporal dominion could lurk in the bosom of his *Holiness* the Pope? What can better pave the way for the progress of unscriptural error than conferring upon it the denomination of *Gospel-truth*? or how can ambition better accomplish its designs than under the insinuating disguise of an *Evangelical Priesthood*?

A writer of sound piety and strong penetration,—a Doctor of Divinity too,—has described, in the homely, honest, language of his time, the leaders of that sect which makes such high pretensions to godliness:—"The only, or at least the principal, thing which that sort of men support themselves by, is the gift of the tongue; a peculiar knack of *talking* religiously; for, if you look into their lives and *temper*, they have no advantage of

other men; and, if you examine into their *principles*, or their *abilities*, that will not mend the matter; and yet they have a strange authority and influence in the world; they charm men into security of their honesty by their talk; they cast a mist before men's eyes that they are taken for godly men, let their PRIDE and PASSION, their COVETOUSNESS and AMBITION, be otherwise as palpable and notorious as they may. This talent of talking is so valuable, it redeems them from suspicion; with this passport they go undetected; they are SAINTS from the teeth upwards, and fools admire them, and so they compass their ends *.”—

Never was a delineation more exact. Never was a picture more faithful to the original.

* Winter Evening Conferences between Neighbours. p. 82, Eleventh Edition. By J. Goodman, D. D. Printed 1720. This valuable work well merited the attention with which it was received by the religious world at the period at which it was written. It is of a class very different from the “Village Dialogues,” “Village Sermons,” and other works of the same stamp, which are daily sapping the foundation of religion amongst us; and which, while they root out of the mind of the ignorant all love of moral righteousness, give them nothing in return but the trash of the Tabernacle.

Worse principles than those taught by the new Priesthood were never sent forth to misguide the world. At no time, and under no circumstances, can they be propagated with safety. But when these illegitimate principles are followed and fed by an equally illegitimate *influence*, we must be sunk into a state of unpardonable apathy if we fail to investigate their tendency, more especially when we find them so extensively patronised and so proudly announced. If they have a tendency to harden the heart, and to deaden and destroy all the grateful and affectionate sympathies which link man to his Maker and to his kind; if their practical effect is to substitute a cold and unfeeling bigotry in the place of a pure and masculine benevolence; if this be—as most assuredly it is—their tendency and effect, we may then calculate, by advance, what we are to expect under the establishment of the *new* HIERARCHY which seems preparing for us. The sinews of its power must be—as, in such cases, it ever has been—in the multitude. It is among the enthusiastic and

unreflecting crowd that the train of its proselytes are made ; it is from that quarter that the main accession of its strength is drawn. It was well observed by some one, (I think by Lord Lyttleton,) that “a fool, with the majority on his side, is the greatest tyrant in the world.”—When fanatics of this stamp shall be of power to drive men into the Temple of their faith, woe be to those who loiter at the threshold.

Of the nature and tendency of the doctrines which are publicly taught we may judge from the specimens already selected from the writings thrust with incessant earnestness into popular circulation. Notwithstanding the dangerous and afflictive consequences to which they most manifestly lead, they have been in no one instance disavowed ;—moral goodness is depreciated,—its concern with our future salvation derided, and its efficacy denied ; and all this—not merely without palliation—but with a zeal incensed by exposure, and an obstinacy aggravated by opposition.

But the ANTI-MORALISTS aver—and it makes a prominent feature in their defence—that they

are quoted unfairly ;—that although they disavow, it is true, the necessity, and deny the value, of practical morality and personal holiness, and declare them to be totally irrelevant to our future salvation, yet that, by diligent attention, I might have found occasional recommendations of moral duty, which I have neglected to notice. That, although it is true they aver self-righteousness to be the criminal result of pride, yet that passages are interspersed in their works which may be interpreted in its favour. That, true it is, they declare righteousness to be *filthy rags*; yet that expressions could, notwithstanding, have been found, had I taken due pains to select them, that might have been put in the balance against the contempt thus cast upon it: Such is the nature of their defence, and it amounts, in other words, to this:—You quote our deliberate doctrine without pointing out our refutation of it in other places. You condemn and expose us, because we declare all obedience to the *moral law* of God to be vain and fruitless; and you

omit to glean those passages in which we run counter to our own creed. Our works, from which you adduce your evidence against us, are sprinkled up and down with contradictions, which you do not give us credit for. You charge us with error and absurdity, but you do not take our *inconsistency* into the account.—This, which is the sum and substance of their vindication, is as preposterous as it is evasive. What unbeliever ever yet carried on his warfare against Christianity, without occasionally mixing a compliment to its utility with his contempt of its obligations? The writings of VOLTAIRE, and of every infidel before and since, furnish instances sufficient of this. What libeller of the Consitution but gives, now and then, a sentence in favour of those principles which it is the direct tendency of his works to discountenance and destroy? When PAINE's Rights of Man came to be defended in a court of justice, his advocate found no difficulty in producing here and there passages of loyal interpretation; and his Age of Reason,

when put upon its defence, was made to furnish passages of devout tendency, and phrases of moral meaning.

I do not affirm of these Evangelical Preachers, that they *never*, in any instance, manifest a respect for that *reason* which they condemn as carnal. I do not affirm that its rays *never* pierce through the dense medium of their dulness, or never skirt, for a moment, the clouds of error in which they envelop themselves. But, when a ray of truth does break forth, as sometimes it does, it is like OSSIAN'S sun-beam in the *Isle of Mist*, and its radiance is soon obscured in the gloom that gathers over it.

In the revolution which the ANTI-MORALISTS are meditating in the Christian world, they manifest the utmost hostility to whatever bears the stamp of intellect. Whenever great changes have been to be brought about by means of the multitude, the cunning of enthusiasts never fails to suggest the same policy. Impostors of every class, religious as well as political, cry down the exercise of *reason*, for they have no chance of escaping

exposure but by bringing men of penetration and inquiry into disrepute. It is well known that the sanguinary tyrant ROBESPIERRE, in his "Journal," called *the learned* "the most dangerous set of men in the republic;"—and so they were, because he dreaded the ordeal which his opinions and measures were made to undergo. *Their* comment was not suited to *his* text.

We are told, by our new spiritual Teachers, that *reason* is not to be applied in the inquiry into the truth or falsehood of their doctrines; they are spiritually discerned, and *carnal reason* has no concern with them.—What insufferable jargon. As well might a man tell me I am not to use my eyes to distinguish between the counterfeit and current coin. Away with such absurdity;—there is fraud and deception upon the face of it. Can we have faith in a doctrine which we have no reason to believe is true? Most certainly not. If then we have reason to believe it true, we must be able to give that reason. To say, therefore, that reason is useless, is to talk like a fool—to say that

it ought not to be exercised, is to talk like a knave.

The prominent and leading truths of Christianity may be seen by common eyes; but, involved, as they have been, in the haze and mist of metaphysics, the most quick-sighted have sometimes searched for them in vain. If men would be content with studying attentively the Evangelists themselves, instead of running blindfold after the impostors who assume their title, the doctrines of the Gospel would never have been perverted amongst us, as now they are; and thousands would have marched under the banners of truth, who now flock to the standard of fanaticism.

Religion has for its object the moral care and the moral cultivation of man. Its beauty is not to be sought in the regions of mystery or in the flights of abstraction. It was intended to be the regulator of life. Its laws were given for our government, and its precepts for our guide. The Gospel carries with it its own evidence; pure, intelligible, sublime, its transcendent excellence is beyond the efforts of man to design or to dictate. The

seal of its Author is on every page.—Its Author is God ; and every page displays his benevolence as clearly as it reveals his will.

The Scriptures were never intended to furnish points of controversy, but rules of obedience. To bewilder the minds of the multitude with the stupid and contradictory gibberish of a WHITFIELD or a WESLEY is to turn their heads instead of turning their hearts. The plain, energetic, homely truths of the Bible, best suit their wants and their capacity. When our Saviour preached upon the Mount, his Sermon was as plain as it was practical ; it discussed no doctrinal points, it laid no stress on modes of faith ; it enforced moral righteousness, and promised the blessings of salvation to the practice of *that* alone. But all this is cold and heartless to the modern saints. This system of *morality* has no charms for the elect. Hawker, Burder, Hill, Cooper, and such like, these are the *faithful Preachers* ; they carry the lantern of CALVIN.—They alone have the patent for the *new light* ; the rest are blind guides.

This new order of Pontiffs are not content

with bestowing on themselves the title of Evangelical Preachers—their apostolic dignity rises in its demands—they have at length risen to a level with the EVANGELISTS *themselves*. That their claim may be known and their rank recognised, the Reverend ROWLAND HILL undertakes to assert their claim, for the purpose of procuring to the *New Gospel Preacher* his due share of popular veneration.

In the Village Dialogues, Mr. MERRYMAN, a Minister of the Church of England, is made to owe his new birth to a Visitation Sermon, preached by *dear* Mr. LOVEGOOD. This Sermon *was blessed* to the Reverend Mr. Merryman; he forsook his brethren of the *Establishment*, and became *serious*; he was Mr. *Merryman* no longer.

“Had you no *serious impressions*,” says the whining Mr. Worthy, “before you heard our *Minister* at the Visitation?”

“Till that time, replies Mr. Merryman, I was the vainest Puppy that ever lived*.” In short, he proceeds to describe himself as

* “Village Dialogues,” by the Reverend Rowland Hill, vol. iii. p. 31, FOURTH Edition.

being as frothy and irreligious as the rest of his brethren, *the Church Clergy*, until, by the precious hearing of the aforesaid Methodist Sermon, “he was instructed to know somewhat of God in truth.”

Dear Mr. Lovegood then gives Mr. Merryman an account of a happy incident in the course of his *experience*. It was a singular circumstance, no doubt, and became on that account worth recording.—“In our neighbourhood,” says he, “there lived another Clergyman, known by the name of Mr. SOBERMAN, who was very correct and chaste in the whole of his deportment.”—Such a character is a phenomenon in the Church of England, no doubt. But as *dear* Mr. Lovegood, in the zeal of his Christian candour and benevolence, truly declares—“We should ever speak well of good, wherever we find it; and I should be happy,” he adds, “if, in every country, and in every line of life, men of such character were more universally to be found. It would be horrid, indeed, if *all* the Clergy were equally dissolute and profane.”

“ Oh, Sir,” rejoins the *converted* Minister, “ it fell to my lot to be acquainted with a sad sample of the worst men of every character ! Some of these were professed libertine Deists ; and *among the Clergy themselves* I found some *Deists in disguise*. But what can be expected from THE CHURCH, *under its present circumstances* * ? ”—

Whilst the Clergy of the Establishment are held up to the people as being destitute of every principle which should characterize the Teachers of Christianity, and as being enemies, both in their preaching and in their practice, to the Gospel, the METHODIST PREACHERS, in the Church and in the Meeting, are not a whit inferior in authority to MATTHEW and MARK, nor in holiness to LUKE and JOHN. Those who were not members of the pious fraternity might presume them to be mortals of common mould ; but *at last*, no doubt, they would be satisfied of their mistake ; it was so at first, it seems, with dear Mr. Lovegood’s convert.

* “ Village Dialogues,” vol. iii. p. 34, 35,

“ Indeed, Sir,” says he, “ I had no conception, *at first*, that there could be any other EVANGELISTS than the *Preachers of the four Gospels* *.”

But the Dialogue that succeeded the Visitation Sermon rectified his misconception of this matter; indeed the Reverend Convert, bred—as he is described to have been—to the Church, had the misfortune to be born in this land, where *Bibles* are so scarce, and in this barbarous age, when *Christianity* is so little taught or understood, that, but for the miraculous good fortune of hearing a METHODIST at a Visitation, he would never have known that the Gospel had ever found its way to this country, or had ever hitherto been preached by any Clergyman within his Majesty’s dominions.—“ Till that hour,” says he, “ I never had the *most distant conception* what was meant by *the GOSPEL*, or a *GOSPEL Preacher*, any more than the horse I rode on to the Visitation †.”

These insinuations, and the slander that

* “ Village Dialogues,” vol. iii. p. 47.

† Ibid, p. 47.

accompanies them, do not fail of their effect. This gentleman's writings are propagated most extensively, and his popularity obtains a very extensive reception to the principles which they contain: the impression they produce in favour of the NEW SPIRITUAL DIRECTORY, and the prejudice they create against the PAROCHIAL CLERGY throughout the kingdom, will be felt, and that too most severely, when this Directory shall be sufficiently powerful to give a *practical direction* to those principles of hostility to the ESTABLISHMENT, which they are spreading, by means of the press, into every district of the kingdom. It has already produced an alarming change, in the minds of the great mass of the lower orders, with respect to the ESTABLISHED CLERGY. The anti-moral faction have increased their partisans, in every quarter, to a most fearful extent. They are struggling to become the predominant party. The plausible pretext of spreading *the Gospel*, and extending *vital Christianity*, serves to lull the suspicions of many whose good sense would otherwise have put them on their guard. "All men," says

Burke, “that are ruined, are ruined on the side of their natural propensities. There they are unguarded. Above all, good men do not suspect that their destruction is attempted through their virtues.”

What can these men—what can any man—mean, by thus casting the National Clergy into derision? Does the cause of religion demand this? Does the happiness or the safety of the commonwealth demand that the hatred of the populace should be thus excited towards them? Can the welfare of the Establishment itself be intended by all this misrepresentation and mockery? No, it is fitted only to produce its destruction; in spite of all their senseless shuffling, the fact can neither be smothered nor concealed; that alone is the *aim*, and that will be the *end*.

Nothing can save us from the coming calamity but a wise and manly attention to the danger. It is near—much too near—and, what is worse, the national character is fast changing. It is not what it was. The masculine strength and moral firmness which

once distinguished the great mass of the British people is daily fading away; METHODISM, with all its cant, with all its cunning, with all its hypocrisy, and with all its meanness, has taken place of that religion which made us what we were, and which, while it gave a moral energy and direction to all our feelings as Christians, gave strength, and vigour, and dignity, to our character as men. It is, perhaps, not yet too late. We may be recovered ;—we may be restored. But if, seeing the cause of our degeneracy, we shut our eyes against it, then will the evil overtake us, and we are gone. Englishmen, in the eyes and in the estimation of all Europe, will not be what they have been—they will be modelled by vulgar, bigotted, mechanic Teachers—and will become the ready comparative for every thing that is insincere, and illiberal, and unprincipled. There will be nothing amongst the majority of us but gloom and grimace, psalm-singing and dissimulation.—To this state we are fast approaching.

It was not in matters of *faith* that the Romans sent for their *Dictators* from the

plough. Men should be fitted for the station they are to fill, whatever it be, or they will be the occasion of much mischief. In whatever is connected with the religious instruction of the people, it is more especially of importance that they should be fully prepared. It is not among the ignorant that the community is to seek for its Instructors.—I am naturally led, by this train of thought, to the memory of JOHN BUNYAN.—I cannot, as some do, look forward to the approaching blessings of being governed in spiritual matters by men of this cast ;—I cannot anticipate much happiness from any revolution that should turn out the present Church Ministers, to make way for gentlemen of his calling. The Reverend ROWLAND HILL, I know, and the whole corps of Evangelists, are very sanguine on this subject. But if the Dialogues of this Divine should convert all the villages in the kingdom to his views of the subject, mine would still remain as they are.

“ If this *formerly wicked Tinker*,” he asks, “ became so good a man, and such an excellent Preacher and writer, is it not to be

lamented that some of *our present Preachers* were not turned into Tinkers, provided we could get such another set of TINKERS to be turned into PREACHERS * ?”

I confess I cannot answer this question in the affirmative.—No honest occupation, however humble, is disgraceful to any man. I can respect the industry of the cobbler in his own stall, but I cannot vote for his promotion to *a stall* in the choir. So with the Tinker; I would give him the care of kettles, but I would not give him *the cure of souls*. So long as he attended to the management and mending of his pots and pans, I would wish success to his industry; but when he came to declare *himself* a “chosen vessel,” and demand permission to take the souls of the people into his holy keeping, I should think that, instead of *a license*, it would be more humane and more prudent to give him a passport to Saint Luke’s.—Depend upon it such men were never sent by Providence to rule or to regulate mankind.

* “Village Dialogues,” vol. iii. p. 24, Fourth Edition.

If a blockhead, fancying himself a mariner, venture on the seas—if he sail without a chart, and steer without a compass—the consequence of his rashness is limited to himself. If he sinks, he suffers alone. But if the same vain pretender, duping others into a belief of his sufficiency, assume the office and station of a Pilot, the danger becomes widely different—the lives of many are put to the risk; if he does not make the right port, but steers them far wide of their destination, his ignorance involves the fate of them all.—Whether the ignorant mechanic forsake his proper calling to become a Preacher or a Pilot, his presumption is equally unpardonable.

We will turn our attention for a few moments to the PILGRIM'S PROGRESS, that *Treasure of Divinity*, as it is termed, to which such an extensive circulation is given—upon which such excessive and endless praise is lavished, and such high honours of editorship conferred*.

* “ An eminent bookseller, lately deceased, who made an estimate of the number of copies sold of the books most generally read, said, ‘ That upwards of *four hundred and*

The *Pilgrim*, in the early stage of his *progress*, is directed into the path of MORALITY by *Worldly Wiseman*—for all those are reprobated and ranked with the *worldly-wise* who enforce the *moral* law of God, and direct mankind to the practice of what is contemptuously termed *self-righteousness*. — But EVANGELIST fortunately meeting this inquiring *Christian*, and finding him thus *misguided* by his *moral* conductor, “he looked upon him,” we are told, “with a *severe* and *dreadful*

thirty thousand copies of the PILGRIM’S PROGRESS have been printed,’ which exceeds the sale of all the other books in the English language, except the Bible and Prayer-Books, by *one hundred thousand* copies.”—

Vide Evangelical Magazine for Dec. 1806. p. 560.

John Bunyan was buried in Bunhill-fields; and so numerous have been—and still are—the dying requests of his idolaters to be buried as near as possible to the place of his interment, that the spot is completely surrounded by dead bodies to a very considerable distance. I am informed, from unquestionable authority, that it is not now possible to obtain a grave near him, the whole surrounding earth being entirely pre-occupied. Surely we have little cause to ridicule the gross superstition of past ages, when this country, and in this enlightened era, affords evidence of superstition as silly and contemptible as the history of human folly and weakness can well exhibit.

countenance,” and forthwith proceeded to accost him thus:—

“ What dost thou here ? ”

He then inquires of him how he came so quickly to turn aside from *his* guidance, and soon succeeds in convincing him that he is now totally out of the way,—and thus an end is put to his *moral career*.

But lest the CHRISTIAN reader should not be so easily dissuaded as the CALVINISTIC *Pilgrim*, or be so readily induced to turn aside from the path of *morality*, these *anti-moral* editors assure us, in a note, that

“ A *truly* awakened conscience can never find relief from the law ” [*i. e.* THE MORAL LAW.] “ The more he looks for peace *this way*, *his guilt*, like a heavy burden, becomes more intolerable ; when he becomes *dead* to the law,—as to *any dependence upon it for salvation*,—by the body of Christ, and married to him, who was raised from the dead, then, and not till then, his heart is set at liberty to run the way of God’s Commandments * ”

* “ Pilgrim’s Progress, by John Bunyan. A New Edition. With Notes on the First Part, by the Reverend

What a jingle of senseless phraseology is here ! How different from the majestic and dignified simplicity of the Scriptures :—“ All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them, *for this is THE LAW and the prophets.*”

Such is the intelligible and eternal command of the Gospel. Such is the solemn injunction of the SON OF GOD. But here we are taught that the *conscience* can never find relief from *obedience to the law* of the Gospel, and are told, directly in the teeth of it, that the more a man looks for peace *this way*, the more *intolerable* becomes the burden of *his guilt* !!—Name, if you can, the Atheist whose dagger ever stabbed the vitals of Christianity more deeply.—“ IF YE LOVE ME,” says the Saviour, “ KEEP MY COMMANDMENTS.” But here, in a tone of amorous mystery, it is declared that until we become *dead to the law*—that is, *dead to his Commandments*, for *they contain THE LAW*, and *in them it consists*—we are neither empowered nor permitted to

J. NEWTON, and OTHERS. On the Second Part, by the Reverend Dr. HAWKER.” Part i. p. 15.

obey them! A man must become dead to the law, by *the body* of CHRIST, and MARRIED to him, and then, and not till then, his heart is set at liberty to run the way of God's Commandments!!—If any man can understand this language, he has powers of comprehension to which I lay no claim. But these doctrines of the anti-moralists I suspect would be, in many instances, even more pernicious and fatal than they are, if the spiritual gibberish of its Teachers did not weaken their efficacy by destroying their meaning.

This note is immediately followed by another, which—in language sufficiently explicit and sufficiently malignant—strives to excite the most rancorous suspicions of the *moral* Clergy of the Establishment, to whom the *Evangelists* of the new Church Militant so arrogantly oppose themselves.

—“Beware of taking men by their looks. They may look as gentle as lambs, while *the poison of asps is under their tongue*; whereby they infect many souls with *pernicious errors* and *pestilent heresies*, turning them from Christ, and the hope of full justification and eternal

life through him ONLY, *to look to, and rely upon, their own works, in whole, or in PART, for salvation* * ”

What infatuation of error, what phrenzy of fanaticism, can instigate any man, or body of men, thus to write and to preach? What! *was the poison of asps under the tongue of the REDEEMER* when he taught men *to look and rely on their own works for salvation*, and confirmed his doctrine by this most plain and most impressive declaration—“For the Son of Man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his angels, and then he shall REWARD EVERY MAN ACCORDING TO HIS WORKS † ?”

Was the poison of asps under HIS tongue when he delivered the Parable of the Talents, and assured his Disciples, and all the future generations of the earth, that every one would hereafter be rewarded according as he, by *his own* exertion, improved the talents committed to his care?—And are mankind now to be taught, in direct defiance of this doctrine,

* “Pilgrim’s Progress,” part i. p. 16.

† Matt. xvi. 27.

neither *to look to* nor rely upon *their own works*, either *in whole* or *in part*, for SALVATION ?

Was the poison of asps under HIS tongue, when, in order to excite men to activity, and to warn them lest they should *fail* to attain salvation by carelessly sleeping at their post, and neglecting those duties, as a reward for the performance of which that salvation would be alone bestowed ;—when, for the sake of teaching more impressively this most important truth, he used the following familiar comparison :—“ For the Son of Man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, *and to every man HIS WORK*, and commanded the porter to watch.

“ *Watch ye*, therefore, for ye know not when the master of the house cometh ; at even, or midnight, or at the cock-crowing, or in the morning.

“ Lest, coming suddenly, he find you *sleeping*

“ And what I say unto *you*, I say unto *all*, *Watch **.”

* Mark xiii.

Did our Saviour INFECT MANY SOULS WITH PERNICIOUS ERRORS when he led them to *hope for eternal life*, NOT through *him ONLY*, without any reliance, *in whole or in part*, on the *fruits* of their own moral exertions, but, on the contrary, taught them to look to *these only* for salvation? When, after exhorting them most earnestly to “BRING FORTH FRUIT WORTHY OF REPENTANCE,” he subjoins the following most solemn protestation:—
 “For now the axe is laid unto the root of the trees, *every tree*, therefore, which bringeth not forth *good fruit*, IS HEWN DOWN AND CAST INTO THE FIRE * ”

Did the Saviour of the World *infect many souls with pestilent heresies*, when he referred those to the *law* who inquired from him the way to *eternal life*, and enjoined the fulfilment of the *moral duties* which that law enjoins as the *sole* foundation of their final acceptance and salvation?

“And, behold, a certain Lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to *inherit eternal life* ?

* Luke iii.

“ He said unto him, WHAT IS WRITTEN IN THE LAW? HOW READEST THOU?

“ And he answering, said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all *thy strength*, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.

“ And he said unto him, *Thou hast answered RIGHT. THIS DO, and THOU SHALT LIVE *.*”

When these men behold their declarations thus pointedly disavowed by the language of the SAVIOUR himself, what will they answer? Will they disclaim the authority of *his* word, as opposed to their own? or will they struggle to evade it by flying to the Epistles, perverting the language of Saint Paul, and pouring forth abuse and invective upon whoever shall thus have compared *their* Gospel with the Gospel of God? That they will carefully revise their creed, it were weakness to expect. They are supported at the expense of Christian truth—it is to these delusive doctrines that they owe their main-

* Luke x.

tenance—their system of error is their daily bread. They seem, for the purpose of supporting *their* own scheme of faith, to have entered into a conspiracy to attack every advocate for the MORAL law of God and the moral happiness of man. You may cite the language of the Redeemer, but if you bring it forward to expose the perfidy of *their* teaching, and the delusion of *their* creed, the authority of the Redeemer himself will not save you from reproach and insult—it will serve only to embolden their insolence and imbitter their rage.

If the Profligate consults this New Gospel Directory, he will there find how speedily the “gripes of conscience” are cured—not by renouncing evil habits—not by a more steadfast adherence to the will of Heaven, and a more strict fulfilment of religious duty—No; the Tinker settles matters much more expeditiously. This Evangelical Empiric has a mystical prescription, which relieves the patient without the difficult and tedious process of reinstating himself in the favour of God by ceasing do evil and learning to do well;—

he administers but a single pill, and the cure is complete. But it will be worth while to attend to the air of low-bred coarseness and ludicrous impiety with which this mystic restorative is recommended. It will enable us, moreover, to take measure of the understanding of that order of Teachers by whom the Tinker is revered as such an invaluable Instructor.

—“ NOW MATTHEW, the eldest son of Christiana, fell sick, and his sickness was sore upon him, for he was much pained in his bowels, so that he was with it, at times, pulled, as it were, both ends together. There dwelt also, not far from thence, one Mr. SKILL, an ancient and well-approved physician; so Christiana desired it, and they sent for him, and he came. When he was entered the room, and had a little observed the boy, he concluded that he was sick of the gripes. Then he said to his mother, What diet has Matthew of late fed upon? Diet, said CHRISTIANA, nothing but what is wholesome. The Physician answered, This boy has been tampering with something that lies in his maw

undigested, and that will not away without means ; and I tell you he must be purged, or else he will die.

“ *Sam.* Then said Samuel, Mother, what was that which my brother did gather and eat, so soon as we were come from the gate that is at the head of this way ? You know that there was an orchard on the left hand, on the other side of the wall, and my brother did pluck and did eat.

“ *Chr.* True, my child, said Christiana, he did take thereof, and did eat ; naughty boy as he was, I chid him, and yet he would eat thereof.

“ *Skill.* I knew he had eaten something that was not wholesome food ; and that food, to wit, that fruit, is even the most hurtful of all. It is the fruit of Beelzebub’s orchard. I do marvel that none did warn you of it ; many have died thereof.

“ Then Christiana began to cry, and she said, O naughty boy ! O careless mother ! What shall I do for my son ?

“ *Skill.* Come, do not be too much dejected ;

the boy may do well again; but he must purge and vomit.

“ *Chr* Pray, Sir, try the utmost of your skill with him, whatever it costs.

“ *Skill*. Nay, I hope I shall be reasonable; so he made him a purge, but it was too weak; it was said it was made of the BLOOD of a GOAT, the ashes of a heifer, and some of the juice of hyssop, &c. When Mr. Skill had seen that *that* purge was too weak, he made one to the purpose: it was made *ex carne ex sanguine Christi*, *John vi. 54—57: Mark ix. 49: Heb. ix. 14:* (you know physicians give strange medicines to their patients:) and it was made into pills, with a *promise* or two, and a proportionable quantity of salt. Now he was to take them *three at a time*, fasting, in *half a quarter of a pint of the TEARS of repentance*. When this potion was prepared, and brought to the boy, he was loth to take it, though torn with the gripes, as if he should be pulled in pieces. Come, come, said the physician, you must take it. It GOES AGAINST MY STOMACH, said

the boy. I must have you take it, said the mother. I SHALL VOMIT IT UP AGAIN, said the boy. Pray, Sir, said Christiana o Mr. Skill, how does it taste? It has no ill taste, said the doctor; and with that she touched one of the pills with the tip of her tongue. Oh! Matthew, said she, this potion is sweeter than honey; if thou lovest thy mother, if thou lovest thy brothers, if thou lovest Mercy, if thou lovest thy life, take it. So with MUCH ADO, *after a short prayer for the blessing of God upon it*, he took it, and it wrought kindly with him. It caused him to purge, to sleep, and rest quietly: it put him into a fine heat and breathing sweat, *and rid him of his GRIPES* * ”

Can absurdity go beyond this? Can the solemnity of the Gospel be more completely burlesqued, or the repentant strugglings of remorse more successfully ridiculed? — The imbecility that could dictate such insane nonsense can only be exceeded by the ignorance of its admirers.

In BUNYAN we find the reverse of all that is majestic and venerable;—his mind, like a

* “ Pilgrim’s Progress,” part ii. p. 56—58.

tramper's bag, contains nothing, but rags, and even those lie in confusion. In his hands every thing seems to become low and ludicrous.

MERCY, one of the most sublime and most exalted, one of the most Heavenly and most affecting, attributes of the Deity; that attribute which, in every page of the Gospel, speaks peace to the soul of the afflicted, and pours the balm of consolation on the wounded spirit—MERCY is here personified; and, being forsaken by Mr BRISK, in a tone of vulgar levity and indecent allusion she is made to express herself thus:—

—“ Well, if *nobody will have me, I will die a maid*, or my conditions shall be to me *as a husband*; for *I cannot change my nature*; and *to have one that lies cross to me* in this, that I purpose never to admit of as long as I live * ”

This lively damsel should confine her language to the purlieus of Old Drury; in that circle it may be well received and well un-

* “ Pilgrim's Progress,” part ii. p. 56.

derstood, but its admirers do not act wisely to extend it further.

A young female, whose parents had been at pains to preserve in her that modest simplicity of mind which is the soul of *moral* virtue, would not, I apprehend, be much edified by such an *Evangelical* dialogue as the following :—

“ *Chr* Well, Neighbour FAITHFUL, said Christian, let us leave him, and talk of things that more immediately concern ourselves. Tell me now what you have met with in the way as you came ; for I know you have met with some things, or else it may be writ for a wonder.

“ *Faith.* I escaped the slough that I perceived you fell into, and got up to the gate without that danger ; only I met with one whose name was WANTON, that had like to have done me a mischief.

“ *Chr.* It was well you escaped her net : Joseph *was hard put to it* by her, and he escaped her as you did ; but it had like to have cost him his life. But what did she do to you ?

“ *Faith.* You cannot think, (*but that you know something*) what a flattering tongue she had; *she lay at me hard to turn aside with her, promising me all* MANNER OF CONTENT.

“ *Chr.* Nay, she did not promise you the content of a good conscience?

“ *Faith.* You know what I mean, all CARNAL and FLESHLY content.

“ *Chr.* Thank God, you have escaped her; the abhorred of the Lord shall fall into her ditch.

“ *Faith.* Nay, I know not whether I did wholly escape her, or no.

“ *Chr.* Why, I trow, you did not consent to her desire?

“ *Faith.* No, not to defile myself; for I remembered an old writing that I had seen, which said, ‘her steps take hold of hell.’

“ *So I shut mine eyes, because I would not be bewitched with her looks; then she railed on me, and I went my way* * ”

This is extremely *instructive*;—but it is not quite so well calculated to form the minds

* “Pilgrim’s Progress,” part i. p. 69, 70.

of the female circle in any decent family as it is to please the taste of the Visitants of *easy virtue* which Mrs. LIGHTMIND describes herself, *with great delicacy*, to have met at Mrs. WANTON's rout, and whose names, with *true feminine modesty*, she thus announces:—

—“ I was yesterday at Madam WANTON's, where we were *as merry as the maids*. For who do you think should be there but I and Mrs. LOVE-THE-FLESH, and three or four more, with Mrs. LECHERY, Mrs. FILTH, and some others? So there we had music and dancing, *and what else was meet to fill up the pleasure*; and I dare say my lady herself is an admirably well-bred gentlewoman, and Mr. LECHERY is as pretty a fellow *.”—

If this work forms—as we are told it does—the TREASURE OF DIVINITY *in the poor man's cottage*, I think it not likely that the *morals* of his children will be much mended by it. Sure I am, that no father of a family, that can at all estimate the importance of keeping from the infant mind whatever

* “ Pilgrim's Progress,” part ii. p. 13.

might raise impure ideas or excite improper inquiries, will ever commend the PILGRIM'S PROGRESS to their perusal.

Young people—and old people too, sometimes—read without affixing any meaning to their words. It is fortunate, as it respects the work before us, that they do so, otherwise the words and phrases that perpetually occur in this “Treasure of Divinity” are such as no *moral Instructor* of youth would debauch their innocent minds by *explaining*.

Can any thing be more indecently coarse than to describe CHRIST as passing through what is termed *Vanity Fair*, which is described, in the grossest terms, as consisting, among other things, “of *lusts, pleasures, and DELIGHTS of all sorts, as whores, bawds,*” &c. * !!!

Is this divinity !!! Is this the *inimitable* book, “which,” as its Evangelical Editors are pleased to tell us, “only they who have the eyes of their mind *enlightened* by the *Spirit of God* can *fully* enter into †?”

* “Pilgrim's Progress,” part i. p. 29.

† See Preface, Variorum Edition. p. 6.

Independent of the shameful and shocking association of the agonies of the REDEEMER with such allusions as are here connected with it, let us ask whether the female mind is likely to be trained to purity by studying this Manual of Piety, and by expressing its devotional desires after the following example:—

“ MERCY, being a *young and breeding* woman, *longed* for something that she saw there, but was ashamed to ask. Her Mother-in-law then asked her what she ailed, for she looked as one not well; then said Mercy, There is a *looking-glass* hangs up in the dining-room, off which I cannot take my mind; if, therefore, I have it not, I think *I shall miscarry*. Then, said her MOTHER, I will mention thy wants to the shepherds, and they will not deny it thee; but she said, *I am ashamed that these MEN should know that I have longed*. Nay, my daughter, said she, it is no shame, but a virtue, to long for such a thing as that; so Mercy said, Then, mother, if you please, ask the shepherds if they are willing to sell it.

“ Now the glass was one of 'a thousand;

it would present a man, one way, with his own features exactly ; and turn it but another way, and it would shew one the very face and similitude of the Prince of Pilgrims himself. Yes, I have talked with them that can tell, and they have said, That they have seen the very crown of thorns upon his head, by looking in that glass ; they have therein also seen the holes in his hands, his feet, and in his side. Yea, such an excellency is there in that glass, that it will shew him to one, where they have a mind to see him, whether living or dead ; whether in earth or in Heaven ; whether in a state of humiliation, or in his exaltation ; whether in coming to suffer, or coming to reign.

CHRISTIANA, therefore, went to the shepherds apart, (now the names of the shepherds were Knowledge, Experience, Watchful, and Sincere,) and said unto them, There is one of my daughters, a *breeding* woman, that, I think, *doth long* for something that she hath seen in this house, and she thinks she shall miscarry if she should by you be denied *.”

* “Pilgrim’s Progress,” part ii. p. 114, 115.

This, assuredly, is not the manner in which religion was taught by the Evangelists of old. This style of teaching seems much better calculated to excite a spirit of ridicule than a spirit of devotion. Children disciplined under this Tutor will make a proficiency not very serviceable to their morals, if they are at all inquisitive. Should a talkative old nurse turn commentator on BUNYAN'S text, how greatly will the innocence and modesty of the rising generation be indebted to her annotations.

The account which Mr STANDFAST gives of the attack made on his chastity by Madam BUBBLE is not adapted to produce very pious impressions in a female circle, or to cherish very exalted sentiments of delicacy:—"She presented herself to me,"—says the demure and modest Mr. Standfast,—“and offered me three things, to wit, her *body*, her purse, and her *bed*: now, *the truth is*, I was both weary and sleepy: I am as poor as a howlet, and that, perhaps, the witch knew. Well, I repulsed her once and again; but she *put by my repulses*, and smiled: then I

“began to be angry, but she mattered that nothing at all. Then she *made offers again*, and said, if I would be ruled by her, she would make me great and happy ; for, said she, I am the mistress of the world, and *men* are made happy by me. Then I asked her name, and she told me it was Madam BUBBLE *.”

The fantastic effusions of John Bunyan afford delight to kindred minds ; his sectarian jargon is exactly seasoned to the reception of illiterate enthusiasts ; its coarseness is suited to their taste, and its language to their capacity. In an age of gross credulity and superstition, when books of all kinds were scarce, such an allegory was a novelty likely enough to be popular. A fabulous narrative would be perused with avidity, when a lecture on moral duty would be laid aside. Hills and valleys, lions and dragons, the attack of GREAT-HEART on the renowned Giant SLAY-GOOD, the demolition of DOUBTING-CASTLE, and the destruction of the grim Giant DESPAIR ;—all this amuses children, and

* “ Pilgrim’s Progress,” part ii. p. 126.

men with the capacity of children. They are delighted with such suppositious achievements; and, finding them well sprinkled with doctrinal texts and doctrinal tenets, they are in raptures. But men of sound sense and sober judgment do not love to find the revelation of God blended with the visions of a Bigot;—they cannot bear that the solemn truths of Christianity should be intermixed with the fooleries of a Fanatic. Such persons venerate religion too much to endure that its sublime precepts should be allegorized into unmeaning nonsense, and the sacred word of the Saviour and his Apostles frittered away and perverted by a Tinker and a Dreamer of Dreams.

John Bunyan certainly came most deplorably qualified to be a Public Instructor; according to the account given us by his present Editors*, who are amply indulgent,—“He was called to the knowledge and ministry of the Gospel from a *low state of life*, as well as from a *vicious course of con-*

* Messrs. Hawker, Burder, and Company.

versation, and was unfurnished with human literature.”—Now VULGARITY, and VICE, and IGNORANCE, let the Tinker’s advocates say what they will, are woeful *preparatives* for those who assume the arduous and responsible situation of Religious Teachers in a corrupt and populous community. It is not uncommon in these days, as in the days that are past, for illiterate enthusiasts, puzzled with mysteries and puffed up with self-conceit, to undertake the conversion of mankind. It is not uncommon for the Carpenter to throw aside his awl, and the Cobbler his lap-stone, to become Preachers of the Word, and Stewards of the Mysteries. An empty head and a heated imagination are the only tools such persons bring to the task of regenerating the world;—they mistake the fermentation of the leaven of *vanity* for the workings of the Spirit of *grace*. Under the auspices of such Spiritual Guides, where at last shall we be led?!! Under the tuition of such Oracles, what in the end shall we learn?!!

With respect to the DOCTRINES into which the youthful mind is initiated by this com-

pendium of the *New Gospel*, we shall take as a specimen that of “IMPUTED RIGHTEOUSNESS.” If the reader has ever found more of extravagant delusion or of stupid perplexity than is crowded into the following space, he is more conversant with the gabble and blasphemy of this class of Teachers than any man of sound mind need wish to be.

—“Now, said CHRISTIANA, it comes to my mind what was said to us at the gate; to wit, That we should have pardon by word and deed: by word, that is, by the promise; by deed, to wit, in the way it was obtained. What the promise is, of that I know something; but what it is to have pardon by deed, or in the way that it was obtained, Mr. Great-heart, I suppose you know; which, if you please, let us hear you discourse thereof.

“*Great-heart.* Pardon by the deed done is pardon obtained by some one for another that hath need thereof; not by the person pardoned, but in the way, saith another, in which I have obtained it. So then, to speak to the question more at large, this pardon

is that which you and Mercy, and these boys, have attained by another; to wit, by Him that let you in at the gate; and he hath obtained it in this double way; he has *performed righteousness to cover you*, and SPILT BLOOD TO WASH YOU IN. ,

“ *Chr* But if he parts with his righteousness to us, what will he have for himself?

“ *Great-heart*. He has more righteousness than *you* have need of, or than he needeth *himself*.

“ *Chr*. Pray make that appear.

“ *Great-heart*. With all my heart: but first I must premise, that He, of whom we are now about to speak, is one that hath not his fellow. He has two natures in one person, plain to be distinguished, impossible to be divided. Unto each of these natures a righteousness belongeth, and each righteousness is essential to that nature; so that one may as easily cause the nature to be extinct, as to separate its justice or its righteousness from it. Of these righteousnesses, therefore, we are not made partakers, so as that they, or any of them, should be put upon us, that we might be

made just, and live thereby: Besides these, there is a righteousness which this person has, as these two natures are joined in one: and this is not the righteousness of the Godhead, as distinguished from the manhood; nor the righteousness of the manhood, as distinguished from the Godhead; but a righteousness which standeth in the union of both natures, and may properly be called the righteousness that is essential to his being prepared of God to the capacity of the mediatory office which he was intrusted with. If he parts with his first righteousness, he parts with his Godhead; if he parts with his second righteousness, *he parts with the purity of his manhood*; if he parts with his third, he parts with that perfection which capacitates him to the office of mediation. He has, therefore, another righteousness, which standeth in performance or obedience to a revealed will; and that is *that* he puts upon sinners, and that *by which their sins are covered*: wherefore he saith, ‘As by one man’ disobedience many were made sinners, so by

the obedience of one shall many be made righteous *.'

" *Chr* But are the other righteousnesses of no use to us ?

" *Great-heart.* Yes: for though they are essential to his nature and offices, and cannot be communicated unto another, yet it is by virtue of them that the righteousness that justifies is for that purpose efficacious.

* This text, from St. Paul, gives not the slightest countenance, when properly understood, to the unscriptural doctrine in support of which the blindfold followers of Calvin perpetually quote it. Its interpretation is simply this:—As by following the fatal example of one man's *disobedience* many were made sinners, so by that pattern of perfect *obedience* which Christ has set before us shall many be made righteous.—This passage, thus understood, is as true as it is intelligible, and is equally consistent with reason and Scripture.

So contradictory is error, that, even by their perverse interpretation of this passage to support one of their doctrines, they destroy another. For example, it is not said that *all*, but that *many*, were made sinners; thus the doctrine of the original depravity of all men is disaffirmed. Even their very doctrine of *imputed righteousness* is contradicted by it, for it is truly averred that *many* shall be righteous, and they, it is said, shall *actually become so*; they shall be MADE RIGHTEOUS, as all will be who follow him who "died setting us an example that we should follow his steps."

The righteousness of his Godhead gives virtue to his obedience; the righteousness of his manhood giveth capability to his obedience to justify; and the righteousness that standeth in the union of these two natures to his office giveth authority to that righteousness to do the work for which it was ordained.

“ So then here is a righteousness that Christ, as GOD, has no need of; for he is God without it: here is a righteousness that Christ, as MAN, has no need of to make him so; for he is perfect man without it: again, here is a righteousness that Christ, as GOD-MAN, has no need of; for he is perfectly so without it. Here is a righteousness that Christ, as God, and God-man, hath no need of, with reference to himself, and therefore he can spare it; a justifying righteousness, that he for himself wanteth not, and therefore giveth it away; hence it is called the gift of righteousness. This righteousness, since Christ Jesus the Lord has made himself under the law, must be given away; for the law doth not only bind him that is under it to do justly, but to use charity; wherefore he must,

and ought by the law, if he hath two coats, to give one to him that hath none. Now our Lord, indeed, *hath* TWO COATS, one for *himself*, and one *to spare*; wherefore he freely bestows *one* upon those who have none. And *thus*, Christiana and Mercy, and the rest of you that are here, doth your pardon come by deed, or by the work of *another man*. Your Lord Christ is he that worketh, and hath given away what he wrought for to the next poor beggar that he meets.

“ But again, in order to pardon by deed, there must something be *paid* to God as a *price*, as well as something prepared to cover us withal. Sin has delivered us up to the just curse of a righteous law. Now from this curse we must be justified by way of redemption, a price being paid *for the harms we have done*; and this is by *the blood* of your Lord, who came and stood in *your place and stead*, and died *your death for your transgressions*. Thus has he ransomed you from your transgressions by *blood*, and covered your *polluted and deformed* souls with **RIGHTEOUSNESS**; for the sake of which

God *passeth by you*, and WILL NOT HURT YOU WHEN HE COMES TO JUDGE THE WORLD.

“ *Chr* *This is brave*: now I see that there is something to be learned by our being pardoned by word and deed *.”—

Can the eternal truths of Christianity be more shockingly perverted?—Can the awful declarations of the Gospel be more effectually annulled?—Can the most abandoned offenders any where meet with more encouragement, or the most obdurate criminals look for better consolation?—Yet such is the *Treasure of Divinity* so precious to the devotion of the new order of Saints!! Such are the effusions of that Miracle of Theology, the Tinker of Bedford †!!!

* “Pilgrim’s Progress,” part ii. p. 38—40.

† Such is the invaluable Instructor, the mention of whose name drew forth from the Eclectic Review such fierce and furious invective:—“In suffering the name of Bunyan to flow from his pen, the writer,” it is there said, “gives proof of infatuation scarcely consistent with mental sanity. It was fitting that such should be the penalty of sacrilege, that the disturber of the dead should be *smitten with fatuity* in his unholy work, and, issuing from the desecrated sepulchre, should announce, in the gibberish of his exultation, the punishment of his *awful* temerity!!!”—Were the proprietors of the Eclectic Review—these Critics of the Sanctuary—indebted for this valuable stricture to the pen of *Mr. Styles*?—I suspect so; for, besides that the maniac

But this Paragon of Purity—this Oracle of the *Sans Culottes* of Methodism—on what

spirit of the passage betrays its author, the passage itself is vamped up again, and made to apply to the writer in the Edinburgh Review, who exposed the insanity of Methodism and Missions: “As if the *awful* spirit of Christianity,” says he, “had *smote him with fatuity*, he drivels and creeps with the meanness of a Grub-street Pamphleteer, &c.†” This is a sample of *criticism*, according to “*the peculiar principles of Evangelical Religion!!*”

The EDINBURGH REVIEWERS had observed, and with great truth, that “the regular Clergy endeavour to do that which, upon the whole, and for a great number of years, will be found to be the most admirable and most useful.”—Mr. Styles, like the rest of the brethren with whom he so proudly associates himself, can suffer no tribute of praise, not even the slightest, to be paid to the character or conduct of the regular Clergy.—“These Clergymen,”—says this *Evangelical* Preacher, in reply to the above observation,—“these Clergymen have had a clear stage for a great number of years; they have been surrounded with every possible advantage; they have had no prejudice to encounter; from no sphere of labour have they been excluded; our universities, our cities, towns, villages, and hamlets, presented them with a wide field, of which, indeed, they were the first occupiers. *But what benefit*, it may be *confidently* asked, *has the community at large derived from their exertions during the last century?*”—This insolent aspersion of the Church Clergy, with much more of the same cast, is followed by a sycophantic eulogy in favour of the Preachers of Methodism:—“It is strikingly obvious,” we are told, “that the *smallest deviation from moral purity* entirely destroys the influence of the *Evangelical Preacher* among his flock. Let him be distinguished by the spirit

† “*Strictures on the Edinburgh Review, on the Subject of Methodism and Missions, &c.* By John Styles,” P 87.

score of merit is it that his PILGRIM'S PROGRESS is thus trumpeted to the skies? It is

of *the world*, let him *once* depart from the dictates of that religion which he has embraced, and which demands the highest moral worth, and *his authority is at an end*, and he must *either join the ORTHODOX CLERGY, or be for ever silenced*†." Is this really the *alternative*? and has Mr. Styles the barefaced impudence to make this assertion? Does he not *himself* know the person against whom a Grand Jury found a Bill of Indictment for an infamous Libel on the resident Clergyman of the place in which he first commenced his *Gospel labours*, and that the *Ministry* of this Libeller is nevertheless *not deserted*? Does he not *himself* know the Seducer who concealed the *illegitimate issue* of his crime, lest the publicity of the fact should preclude his admission to the Seminary at *Hoxton*? And can he affirm that this culprit, in consequence of this *small deviation from moral purity*, either found himself compelled to *join the ORTHODOX Clergy*, or was *for ever silenced*? As these facts must be within *the recollection* of Mr. Styles, it is hoped he will, in future, not be so forgetful as to calumniate the Clergymen of the Establishment with such *Pharisaic* arrogance, or to pledge himself so stoutly to the purity of that *immaculate* Priesthood which he presses forward with such strutting self-importance to defend.

As to his EPISTLE, purporting to be "A Vindication of the Nature and Effect of Evangelical Preaching," it is written in a tone of drunken insolence which can excite no feeling but of contempt.

Perhaps the most comprehensive and correct Critique on this Pamphlet was given by a friend of mine, who, throwing it by, after the perusal of it, said—"This fellow argues like a Fool, and writes like a Blackguard."

† "Strictures on the Edinburgh Review," &c. P. 71, et seq.

obviously this:—Because it lays in the infant mind the foundation of those doctrines which make up the Creed of the NEW CHURCH. We have seen the prominent figure which the favourite doctrine of “imputed righteousness” makes in this wonderful allegory; we shall now turn to it as it is condensed in the “DECLARATION” containing the Articles of Faith, which every Student educated in the Academies which yearly send forth their swarm of GOSPEL PREACHERS over the land is bound to subscribe*.”

The following is an extract from

“ARTICLE VII. ALL THAT ARE SAVED are justified by the righteousness of Christ, IMPUTED TO THEM. God pardons their SINS, and accepts them AS RIGHTEOUS, not on account of any thing in them, OR DONE BY THEM, but for Christ’s sake ALONE.”

Is it possible to pause even for a moment on

* Entitled, “A Declaration as to some controverted Points of Christian Doctrine.” It is not sold, but is published for the private use of the Students of Hoxton and Homerton, and such other Seminaries of the Saints. I shall take a future opportunity of making it a subject of more detailed investigation.

this doctrine, and not shrink backward with terror? Is this the belief to be poured, through a thousand channels, into the minds of the profligate populace of this great city? Can we ponder over the practical consequences of this creed, and not find our attention rivetted in horror? Call forth the Robber from his cavern, and the midnight Murderer from his den; summon the Seducer from his couch, and beckon the Adulterer from his embrace; cite the Swindler to appear, that feeds on the bread of hungered industry, and the Procuress, that lies in wait for innocence, and fattens on the price of prostitution; assemble from every quarter all the various miscreants whose vices deprave, and whose villanies distress, mankind;—and when they are thus thronged round you in a circle, assure them—not that there is a God that judgeth the earth—not that punishment in the great day of retribution will await their crimes—not that they must repent and turn away from the wickedness which they have committed, and do that which is lawful and right if they would save their souls alive: no, let no declarations of this stamp be addressed to them;

let no exhortations of this sort be heard : all this would damp the ardour of villany, and alarm the hardihood of guilt. Let every sinner in the throng be told that they will stand *justified* before God ; that *the righteousness of Christ* will be imputed to *them* ; and that consequently they will be precisely in the same condition as if they had led a life of the utmost holiness ; that the not forsaking their guilty courses will not intercept their certainty of salvation, for God *pardons their sins*, and *accepts them as righteous*, by *imputation*, and without being at all influenced by any act *done by them* ; that their own righteousness will profit them nothing, and of course the practice of it is unnecessary, because it is useless, and superfluous, because it is unavailing.

Let us look at this doctrine as it is preached to the servants, mechanics, and ignorant farming men in our villages, and we shall not wonder that they flock to “ hear the word,” as it is expounded from the pulpit of their *Evangelical Minister*

—“ The righteousness of Christ is to and upon all who *believe* in him : it is *trans-*

ferred to them, imputed to them, or reckoned to their account, AS IF THEY HAD THEMSELVES PERFORMED IT; and on this ground it is that they are admitted into the realms of light and glory: therefore are they before the throne, because they have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, and not on account of any GOODNESS, VIRTUE, or GOOD WORKS of their own ”*

Again: “ All have sinned, sin being the transgression of the law. How, then, can any man, being a sinner, become righteous? There is *but one way*: it is to the righteousness of Christ, *put to the account of* AN UNRIGHTEOUS MAN † ”

Whoever encourages men to expect the reward of virtue without the practice of it, lays the axe at the root of all religion. That the Calvinistic Priesthood do this is most manifest. If all the swindlers who live by fraud and depredation on this town of London are to have the *righteousness* of Christ transferred to them, and placed to their account, *as if they had them-*

* Burder's Village Sermons, Sermon 19, p. 5.

† Ibid. Sermon 12, p. 141.

selves performed it, what have they to fear? Can men be better tempted to continue in their habit of wickedness by any doctrine that Atheism can frame, or that Infidels can teach? It is a doctrine which every bad man will willingly embrace, because it absolves him hereafter from all personal responsibility; but if a thinking man should adopt it, he must from that time shut up his Bible, or he will infallibly disturb his faith.

That a *sinner* should be *accounted righteous* is a contradiction in terms. A HOUSEBREAKER can never be accounted an honest man on the score of another person's integrity. An ADULTERER may find some one to stand surety for the damages awarded against him; but protecting him from the penal consequences of his *guilt* can never make him *righteous*. Suppose HOWARD had been content to suffer instead of ABERSHAW, the benevolent actions of that great philanthropist could in no manner be *imputed* to that desperate murderer, *as if he had performed them*. The thing is not possible. He would have been an *acquitted felon*, and nothing more. *He that DOETH righteousness is righteous*: thus

says the Scripture ; and none but an ideot or an infidel would dare to give the lie to it by declaring that he that doeth *unrighteousness* is accounted *righteous*. Will the DRUNKARD, in the Day of Judgment, be held to have lived *soberly*, or the HIGHWAYMAN to have led a life of *honesty*? When that great day shall arrive, will chastity be *imputed* to the licentious, or piety *transferred* to the profane?—How is it possible that men in their senses can teach such a doctrine? How is it possible they can so shamefully deceive others, or so grossly impose upon themselves?

Let us refer to the PARABLES of our Saviour. Were industry and diligence *imputed* to the slothful steward that hid his talent in the earth? Were the *foolish* virgins accounted *wise*? or, having neglected to supply their lamps with oil; were they accounted to have kept them burning? JOHN BUNYAN, indeed, tells us that Christ has a *coat more than he wants*, and that with this *he covers the sinner*; but it appears that the man who was found at the marriage supper, *not having on a wedding garment*, had no covering of this kind presented to him; but

that, on the contrary, he was consigned over to the punishment pronounced against such as had neglected to prepare themselves. Has the Saviour any where promised that his righteousness should be placed to the account of an unrighteous man? Has he led mankind in any manner, by his precepts or his conduct, to infer it? When we read that the *unprofitable* servant was ordered “to be cast into utter darkness,” what becomes of the doctrine of *transfer*? Was he by virtue of Christ’s righteousness accounted a *profitable* servant? Were vigour and fruitfulness *imputed* to the BARREN fig-tree, or was it withered by a curse?—It was when PAUL reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, that FELIX *trembled*. What consolation would it have afforded to the Roman Governor to have learned that the Saviour, having passed his life in doing good, his *righteousness* would be placed to the account of the *wicked*, and on that ground *he would be admitted in the realms of light and glory*?—Such a doctrine as this to a bad man can never come ill-timed: it always meets his conscience at the convenient season. Never

will he say to the Preacher of it, as FELIX did to the Apostle of the Gentiles, “ Go thy way for this time.”

To ascend the steep of virtue is a task of great labour and perpetual vigilance : it is much easier to loiter below, and to believe that another has ascended *in our stead*, and that he will bestow on *our* indolence the reward of *his* perseverance !

RIGHTEOUSNESS is a term of extensive import, and includes in it the discharge of all those duties which constitute a Christian life ; but those duties, to be conscientiously fulfilled, require great forbearance on our part, and great exercise of self-denial. Nothing can be more commodious than to get rid of all this difficulty, by having *faith* in some High-Priest of the new Temple, who will assure us that all righteousness has been fulfilled *for us*, and will be placed *to our account*, as if we had *ourselves* fulfilled it ; and that a life of piety and obedience will no more contribute to our future salvation than a life of impiety and disobedience ; for that mankind are not admitted into Heaven on

account of any GOODNESS, VIRTUE, OR GOOD WORKS of their own.

An Apostle, indeed, tells us, that “ the Lord knoweth how to deliver the Godly out of temptation, and *to reserve the UNJUST unto the DAY OF JUDGMENT to be PUNISHED* *.” But this is the *old* Gospel, and is not at all suited to the *sinner’s necessities*. The *new* dispensation is of quite another stamp. It declares to the *unjust* that the *punishment* due to them has been already suffered ; and that at the *day of JUDGMENT* they will be deemed righteous, and will be held to have led that holy life which Christ led, but the example of which they disregarded ; and to have fulfilled those precepts which he fulfilled, but which they failed to obey

Those who implicitly adopt opinions are often not capable of comprehending the arguments brought to refute them : this must inevitably be the case with the greater part of mankind. Unaccustomed to reasoning, they hold a doctrine as *true*, because they cannot

* 2 Peter, c. ii. v. 9.

follow the train of discussion or inquiry which proves it to be *false*. The Teachers, moreover, by whom they are misled, have recourse to a mode of deception of which the ignorant and unreflecting are not aware ; it is this:—The *conclusions* deduced from their doctrines by those who are at pains to examine them, they bring forward as *first principles* taught by their adversaries, and they proceed to reprobate them accordingly

That I may be properly understood, I will give an instance of this :—Dr. HAWKER, as we have already seen, affirms “ that the Gospel has *neither terms nor conditions* ;” and tells the multitude that “ *their offences cannot be too great or too aggravated*, when once the weapon of sin has fallen from their hands, to *exclude them from salvation*, for that the *blood* of Christ cleanseth from *all sin*.”—When you deduce from this doctrine the inference to which it plainly leads, which is this :—That the swindler or seducer may add one crime more to the catalogue, before he throws down the weapon, since it is declared that the *previous extent or atrocity* of his crimes cannot be too

great or too aggravated, and that he may then look to be purified from *all sin*, and exempt from *all punishment*, by the *blood* of the Redeemer;—when, I say, you thus point out the frightful consequences to which this style of teaching directly leads, in what manner do they seek to defend it?—Not by shewing distinctly that your conclusions are untruly drawn—No; the mode to which they most artfully have recourse is this:—Keeping *their own* doctrines in the back ground, they represent *you* as giving a license to the swindler and the seducer to multiply these offences, and then to look to the *blood* of their Saviour as cleansing them from sin. And they proceed to abuse and reprobate *you* as an Infidel, and as one who “accounts the blood of the Covenant an unholy thing,” when the real truth is, that this doctrine, which they misrepresent as *yours*, is no other than *their own* doctrine, drawn out and exposed, and from the consequences of which they feel themselves unable to escape.—As they propagate their errors, so they support them—by artifice and fraud.

Leaving these doctrinal discussions for the present, I will take leave to remark, before I quit the subject of the *Pilgrim's Progress*, that the ideas conveyed through the medium of this allegory are well calculated to corrupt the simplicity and innocence of the infant mind, and to make it familiar with the language of debauchery and prostitution; and such as are anxious to keep the minds of their children untainted by impure associations, and unpolluted by obscene allusions, will pause before they give the first place in the infant's library to a work in which such colloquial indecencies abound. Miss EDGEWORTH, in her *Treatise on Practical Education*—a work which contains more sound sense and valuable information than is to be found in all the voluminous labours of the Calvinistic Priesthood taken together—makes the following most judicious and important observations:—

“ It may be laid down as a first principle that we should preserve children from the knowledge of any vice, or any folly, of which the idea has never entered their minds, and which they are not necessarily disposed to learn by example. Children who have never

lived with servants, who have never associated with ill-educated companions of their own age, and who in their own family have heard nothing but good conversation, and seen none but good examples, will, in their language, their manners, and their whole disposition, be not only free from many of the faults common amongst children, *but they will absolutely have no idea that there are such faults.*—It is the same with bad habits; falsehood, caprice, dishonesty, obstinacy, revenge, and all the train of vices which are the consequences of mistaken or neglected education, which are learned by BAD EXAMPLE, and which are not inspired by NATURE, *need scarcely be known to children whose minds have from their infancy been happily regulated.* Such children should be sedulously kept from contagion; their minds are untainted; they are safe in that species of ignorance which alone can deserve the name of bliss. No books should be put into the hands of this happy class of children but such as present the best models of virtue; there is no occasion to shock them with caricatures of vice; such caricatures they will not understand to be well

drawn, *because they are unacquainted with any thing like the originals.* Examples to deter them from faults to which they have no propensity must be *useless*, and may be *dangerous*. For the same reason that a book written in bad language should never be put into the hands of a child that speaks correctly, a book exhibiting instances of vice should never be given to a child that thinks and acts properly * ”

It is greatly to the credit of the present age that many persons of great intellectual acquirements have devoted themselves to the service of Religion and Science. Books adapted to this purpose have been given to the public by females of deserved celebrity, as well for excellence of character, as for strength of understanding †. Women, judiciously educated, are usually the best, as well as the safest, Tutors of Infancy There is a

* “ Practical Education. By Maria and R. L. Edgeworth. In three volumes.” Vol. ii. p. 89.

† The name of Mrs. BARBAULD, on this occasion, deserves to be mentioned with peculiar respect.

delicacy and chasteness in their tone of instruction which are not always found in masculine Preceptors.

“ We are acquainted with the mother of a family,” says the excellent authoress just mentioned, “ who has never trusted any book to her children without having first examined it herself with the most scrupulous attention ; her care has been repaid with that success in education which such care can alone ensure. We have several books before us marked, which, having undergone some necessary operations with the scissors, would, in their mutilated state, shock the sensibility of a nice librarian. But shall the education of a family be sacrificed to the beauty of a page, or even to the binding of a book ? Few books can safely be given to children without the previous use of the pen, the pencil, and the scissors * ”

It would be well if the example of this judicious and excellent parent, whoever she

* “ Edgeworth on Education,” vol. ii. p. 87

was, were more generally followed. The evil produced by the early perusal of books not properly selected is incalculable.

Nothing but the meanest imbecility or the most deplorable prejudice can wed us to the hob-nail coarseness and impure fanaticism of JOHN BUNYAN, in an age abounding with books admirably adapted to the end of training the youthful mind to the acquirement of knowledge, and impressing it with the plainest and purest principles of religious truth.

I cannot entirely dismiss the Pilgrim's Progress without drawing attention to the *notes* which are interspersed throughout by its modern Editors *, in order, no doubt, to impress the multitude with a belief of the superior Godliness of the Apostles of the New Church, and to attract the sympathy of the lower classes towards them, on account of the *hardships* which they suffer, and the *persecution* to which they are exposed, for *their* safety. Such insinuations are not meant to be without their effect. The *New Spiritual Power* will, in due time, crave the aid of *their* fol-

* Messrs. Hawker, Burder, &c.

lowers to defend them against the hatred which they encounter, and “strengthen them that they may vanquish and overcome all their enemies;” by which are meant all such as oppose *their* supremacy, or refuse assent to *their* creed.

The following annotations hold out a very discouraging prospect to those who may feel inclined to forsake the evil of their ways, and to walk in the path of religious duty.

“When a man turns his back on the world, and is in good earnest resolved for everlasting life, his carnal friends, and ungodly neighbours, *will pursue him with hue and cry*; but *death is at his heels*, and he cannot stop short of the City of Refuge.” (P 5. n. 8.)

This representation of the state of real Christians is as mischievous as it is false. Let any one, with his eyes open, look abroad in the world, and ask himself—Is the man who conscientiously endeavours to conform his life to the precepts of Christianity *pursued with hue and cry*?!!—If he “visit the fatherless and the widow in their affliction, and keep himself unspotted from the world,” is *death*, on that account, at *his heels*, and is he exposed to

contempt and persecution?!! On the contrary, are not such characters respected, even by bad men, wherever they are known, and esteemed wherever they are seen? How, then, can these Preachers deter persons from following the path of religious duty, by thus lying in the face of fact, and representing the condition of a truly good man in society as one of all others the most comfortless and the most desperate.—We must beware how we take our estimate of Christianity from the *mock-heroics* of Methodism. If these men—calling themselves “the Godly”—have real reason to complain of the conduct of mankind towards them, it is a proof that they are not what they appear to be. Their complaints divulge a secret which it is hardly sound policy in them to disclose. But they ought not, nevertheless, to affright the votaries of true Religion from her altar, by lamentations which can only apply to suspected hypocrites or detected knaves.

Three things are enumerated, as bringing with them all the terrific horrors of martyrdom.

“Three things the world cannot bear in a Christian:—1st. His garment; that is, his profession of justification by the righteousness of Christ—2d. His language; what he can declare of the great things which God hath done for his soul; his sense of pardoning love, and communion with God in Christ—3d. His preciseness, as they call it, in refusing to conform to their vain and sinful practices. On these accounts, *believers*, if consistent and upright in their profession, are a gazing-stock, and a laughing-stock; must EXPECT, *at the best*, trials of *cruel mockings*; and *sometimes* are EXPOSED to STRIPES, IMPRISONMENT, and DEATH.” (P 91. n. 7.)

One would really think that the axe of the Civil Magistrate was lifted up against these querulous Priests, and that they were called to wrestle, in good earnest, with “principalities and powers, and against the rulers of the darkness of this world.” The bulk of their disciples must be filled with resentment when they are thus called to contemplate the sufferings to which *their Spiritual Pastors* stand exposed! What a task it is for them

to contend “against spiritual wickedness in high places,” in order to defend “the elect,” and to keep the corner-stone of the conventicle firm in its place. What a contempt of death do they manifest in the midst of direful *opposition* ! Were it not that they disdain “*filthy lucre*,” what a handsome *contribution* ought the congregations to make to compensate all the “pelting of this pitiless storm !” What an increase of *salary* ought, in justice, to reward the serenity and steadfastness with which they endure the *persecution* of their adversaries ! Above all, what enthusiasm ought to be manifested in favour of the *Saints*, whom, it would appear, *stripes, imprisonment, and death*, await in the exercise of their ministry, and threaten in their progress Zion-ward.

The Calvinistic Methodists—or, to use their own phrase, the people of God—are represented as the victims of slander, as well as *inhumanity*.

“CRUELTY and CALUMNY are usually joined when the PEOPLE OF GOD suffer. The one GRATIFIES the spirit of persecution, the other is designed to justify it.” (N 8.)

The spirit with which all their *merciless treatment* is to be borne is next pointed out, and they are reminded of the good effects which will result from the meekness *with which they sustain their persecution*.

“ *Patient bearing of injuries* is true Christian fortitude, and will always be more effectual to *disarm our enemies*, and to bring others to the knowledge of the truth, than all *arguments* whatever. A time of *outward trouble to the Church* is usually a *season of grace*. The *exemplary* conduct of those who *suffer for the truth* conciliates an attention to their principles.” (N 9.)

The conflict they endure is represented as a thing of course.

“ When we come to make the word of God the rule of our conduct, and not the ways and customs of the world, *we must expect to feel the weight of opposition* from those who live directly contrary to the Gospel, and fashion their religion after the smooth easy way of *the times*.” (P. 98. n. 2.)

The next admonitory note warns them of what, in this great encounter, they must *be content to suffer*.

“ We are not now, blessed be God ! called to suffer *unto death* ; but if *any man* will live Godly in Christ Jesus, *he* MUST SUFFER PÉRSECUTION, and be content to bear what the *malice* of the enemy shall be permitted to accomplish against us. Suffering is the way to glory. If we would reign with Christ, we must be content to suffer with him shame, reproach, or, if called to it, even DEATH itself ” (N. 3.)

But, under all this *fierceness of persecution*, and in the midst of *their sufferings*, they are thus consoled and encouraged :—

“ It is the Lord’s cause, and he is able to protect *his servants*, and make a way for *their escape*. He calls some to *the honour of suffering* ; others he delivers from dangers *equally apparent* ; and, though *their enemies* FIGHT and RAGE, they cannot prevail against them. ‘ The blood of the MARTYRS is the seed of the CHURCH.’ ” (N. 4, 5.)

The stout conflict between *Great-heart* and the Giant *Maul* presents occasion to subjoin the following illustration :—

“ The PÉRSECUTION which faithful and la-

borious MINISTERS meet with in their Lord's service are here described under the image of a violent struggle between Mr. Great-heart and Maul the Giant. But, as in this instance, so in every other, the Lord makes *the issue* to result to his own glory, in THE VICTORY of HIS SERVANTS. ‘*More than conquerors they shall be, through him that loveth them.*’” (B. ii. p. 73. n. 3.)

The *Reverend* Mr. BURDER, in his poetical version of this Manual of Piety, does not fail to illustrate it with notes of the same complexion; for example, when the Pilgrim is put in bodily fear by the Lions, this great Expositor adds the following explanatory comment:—

“The LIONS may signify any of those *spiritual enemies* which oppose our Christian course, and which hinder *modest professors* from the enjoyment of *Church-fellowship*. But *all our enemies are chained*; that is, they are restrained by *Divine power*.”—

Knowing the extensive circulation of this work, and the *implicit faith* with which whatever is to be found in it is received, can we for-

bear to ask, To what purpose is all this gross and unparalleled misstatement? Can any persons, professing to be Ministers of the Gospel of *Truth*, draw such a picture of the condition of *their followers* as is here delineated?—Can it have any other effect than to *alienate* those followers—increased, as they are, to an extent that is incredible—from that constitution under which all the persecution *thus insinuated to exist* is permitted?—Can it have any other effect than to separate them in interest, and withdraw them in affection, from their fellow-subjects, by whom it is presumed to be inflicted?—Do not the CALVINISTIC METHODISTS enjoy, in common with every other sect, a mild, protective, and liberal toleration? Are they not even tolerated to a degree of patronage? What design, then, is to be answered by these Sectarians thus inducing the mass of their adherents to consider themselves as a *suffering and persecuted body*? Those who have read the history of this country, or who know any thing of human nature, know what fatal consequences have ensued from *feelings thus excited* in weak

and bigotted minds? For my part, I see no other purpose that such shameful misrepresentation can effect, except to divide the kingdom into two descriptions—the Godly, and the unregenerate; and, by teaching the one to consider themselves as suffering under the abhorrence and opposition of the other, to introduce a spirit of enmity, and to pave the way to all the evils of civil jealousy and domestic disunion.

There is something even in mistaken enthusiasm that the benevolent may esteem;—there is something about it that good men will respect. The errors of a misguided mind ought never to be treated with severity; but the errors and enthusiasm of this mushroom race of Preachers, that overswarm the land, are not of this cast. It is impossible to give them credit for integrity when we behold the obstinacy and the artifice with which they defend their system against the strongest argument, and against the clearest evidence. When, too, in addition to this, we perceive those errors made subservient to their worldly interest; that reason is vilified, and morality

degraded, in order to make way for them ; that no opportunity is overlooked to promote their influence, and no zeal spared to extend their power ; that, so far from wishing honestly to inquire into the truth, or earnestly to serve the cause of moral righteousness, the more strongly truth is placed before them the more they are provoked, and the more strenuously any one defends MORALITY the more do they strive to overwhelm him with rancour and invective. Their doctrines are at war with truth and virtue, and they first wilfully deceive themselves, only that they may the more conscientiously impose upon others. A sincere principle of love to God cannot actuate such Teachers ;—to give them credit for good intention is not candour, but credulity.

Take the character of the fraternity from any member of the sect, and their piety is without a parallel : but strip off their mask of sanctity, and sketch them as they stand, and I fear the portrait will present the Pharisee in the place of the Saint. Their preaching, it is said, has made converts from the ale-house ; and, we are told, Swearers, turned

Methodists, cease their profanation. On this subject I will quote the just and striking observations of an excellent modern writer :—
 “ In whatever village,” says he, “ the fanatics get a footing, drunkenness and swearing—sins which, being more exposed to the eye of the world, would be ruinous to their great pretensions to superior sanctity—will, perhaps, be found to decline ; but I am convinced, from personal observation, that lying and dishonesty, that every species of fraud and falsehood—sins which are not so readily detected, but which seem more closely connected with worldly advantage—will be found invariably to increase*.”

The prevailing opinion in society coincides with, and corroborates, this statement. The same hollowness and hypocrisy which our Saviour so fully detected and so sharply re-proved in the *Godly* Pharisees of old time is manifested in their puritanic posterity. The same superstitious display of the outward and visible signs of devotion ; the same *long*

* “ Religion without Cant. By Robert Fellowes, A. M. of St. Mary Hall, Oxford.”

prayers; the same *faith* in the *elective* preference given to them as the Godly of the earth; the same pious thanksgiving that they are not “as other men are;” the same rigorous abstinence from all appearance of recreation on the Lord’s *day*; and the same neglect of the weightier matters of the *moral* law, in the course of the *week*; all these, and many more features, assimilate both.—So likewise the same accusation which our Saviour brought against the Pharisees of his day, that they “taught for *doctrines* the commandments of men,” applies to the modern Pharisees with equal force. His charge against them, that they would “compass sea and land to make one *proselyte*,” equally includes the sect who furnish, in character, so exact a counterpart. Even their cant of super-righteous zeal is expressed in the same terms. When our SAVIOUR restored the blind man, by anointing his eyes and directing him to bathe in the Pool of Siloam*, they strove, with a shew of religious zeal, to discredit his miracle, and to charge

* John ix. 24.

him with guilt ;—but they did not omit to adopt that sanctified phraseology which is found so perpetually in the mouths of their descendants :—“ Then again called they the man that was blind, and said unto him, *Give God the praise*, we know that this man is A SINNER * ”

* A most deplorable, but by no means uncommon, instance of the prostitution of religious phraseology may be found in the “ Statement of Facts,” lately published by the Plaintiff, in the case of FLOWER *versus* CLAYTON, on a trial for defamation. Mr. Flower, it seems, had written to the latter gentleman, who had declared that “ he would not contribute a shilling to save him from a gaol,” soliciting a renewal of that friendship which he had done no act to forfeit ; expressing himself extremely reluctant to be on terms of enmity with the *husband of his sister*, and suggesting his willingness to continue towards him that spirit of kindness to which he had formerly acknowledged himself so much indebted. Of the reply which he received from the *Reverend* Mr. CLAYTON to this Letter, Mr. FLOWER has laid the following extract before the public :—“ A due regard to the *sanctity of my office* prevents me from holding any intercourse with you, and I therefore PEREMPTORILY *forbid your entering my doors*.——At the same time, I shall not cease *to pray for you*, both in the closet and in my family, that God would *deliver you from all blindness, and hardness of heart, and contempt of his word and commandments*.”—Vide “ Statement of Facts,” &c. p. 18.

When charity was solicited from the Priest in the Fable, he refused to contribute a shilling to save the suppliant from starving, but he gave him *his blessing*. The heart

Religion is perverted by these men into an affair of speculation. The most popular doctrines are the doctrines for them. A CONCORDANCE, affording a ready reference to every text, at the same time that it saves them all trouble of examination or research, serves to procure them credit with the ignorant for being well read in the Gospel. With this class of Teachers, the moral duties of justice and benevolence, ‘those eternal links that clasp the world,’ are as nothing in the scale of *their* faith. It is, indeed, a lucrative system, for too many of these MINISTERS of the SANCTUARY,—as they proudly term themselves,—keep open a sort of account current with religion; with them its claims are adjudged by the average of profit and loss; they post the returns of their faith from the waste-book to

of the holy man had nothing else in its gift. The *Reverend Mr. CLAYTON*, in the treatment of his brother-in-law, improved upon the pious precedent which he found in the satire of the Fabulist: he retarded him by the refusal of his purse, but he gave him *a lash with THE LITANY*—He denied him the satisfaction of his friendship, but he gave him *the slander of HIS PRAYERS*.

the ledger, and estimate its value by the calculation of its nett proceeds.

The practice of preaching without the aid of a written sermon carries to the vulgar the appearance of immediate inspiration. But, in fact, nothing is more easy than to harangue an ignorant audience who sit prepared to admire what they cannot comprehend, and to approve what they do not understand. To pour out, as these men do, at random, “whatever suggests itself, without considering whether it tends, how it is connected, or to what it may be applied,” is no difficult task. The difficulty, in such case, is not so much how to proceed, as when to leave off. They have a certain set of doctrines which furnish the substance of all their discourses. Like barrel-organs, they repeat, perpetually, the same airs. There may be a variation in the key, but the tunes are always the same. In truth, extempore preaching, like extempore playing, is only fit for a finished performer. The unstudied effusions of a man of genius often display more sublimity than the most deli-

berate efforts of less enlightened minds; but when the ignorant enthusiast begins to *extemporize*, he is only likely to produce, without study, what no one that had studied would ever have produced.

Dr. HAWKER will, perhaps, accuse me of disrespect in having proceeded thus far without noticing his second Letter. I do certainly not think, that, in the period in which we live, it is either discreet to teach, or adviseable to learn, such lessons of doctrine as peculiarly belong to his school. At the same time, it is not to the Teachers *themselves* that I address myself with any hopes. You might as well argue with Aldgate-pump, as to any effect to be produced upon them by reasoning. The writer of the present work has no wish but to appeal to the sober sense of his countrymen, and to press upon their serious attention the subject he has brought before them. It has been handled already by abler pens, but the evil to be combated still exists, and with aggravated danger. So far from being removed or lessened, it is daily

growing in greatness and in strength. It is the good sense and sober caution of the public that can alone be applied to with success; those who profit by error and prejudice are not the persons to be addressed in behalf of truth. Who would think of appealing to a Cardinal against the corruptions of Popery, or exposing to the High-Priest the errors of Judaism?

But, waving this discussion, I will turn my attention, for a few moments, to Dr Hawker

This Divine, I hope, will not impute it to me as a fault that I am not impressed with that thorough conviction of his infallibility in matters of faith to which he appears to lay claim. It is recorded of the celebrated BALZAC, that he held himself in such reverence, that he never had occasion to mention his own name but he pulled off his hat. Whether the *Vicar of Charles* stands with equal awe in his own presence, those who know him can best tell;—I have not that honour. I should be sorry, however, to approach him, even in the field of contro-

versy, without due deference;—his profession entitles him to that respect which his talents might, perhaps, not so readily command. Nevertheless, if, in the comments which his publications have drawn from me, I have been guilty of any thing like unfairness, I owe him an apology which I would not wilfully withhold. Popularity is a precious thing; it is brittle, moreover, and ought not to be rudely handled. But one thing is required of all who demand reparation, and it is this, to prove the injury complained of: all accusations, of whatever nature, must be verified, or they go for nothing. The Doctor, in the present instance, prefers his charge with great confidence, but he comes into court without his witnesses:—“Let the greatest enemy,” says he, “upon earth to Evangelical principles, read my little publication, entitled ‘A Prop against all Despair,’ as it is in itself, and let him judge between us if there ever was a greater perversion of an author’s design or subject than you have made of it. Sir, if the word of God was to be garbled and torn, it might be made a libel; nay, it

might be made to speak the very reverse of all its sacred contents * ”

To pervert the meaning of any writer, by forcing any passages in his works from the context necessary to their explanation, or to twist them in any manner from their true sense in order to make them the subject of a comment which their genuine import would not justify,—such conduct I hold to be as dishonourable as it is unjust. It marks a want of manliness and integrity which cannot be too strongly reprobated. But this is a conduct which it is always in the party's power, against whom such unfairness is exercised, to expose. The means of defence are in his own hands, and nothing is more easy than the application of them. He will produce the passages as they stand in their original connection, and will thence shew how they disavow the comment ; he will compare the doctrine, as distinctly laid down in his work, with the doctrine as it stands mutilated in the annotations of his adversary ;

* “ A Second Letter to a Barrister, &c. By Robert Hawker, D. D. Vicar of Charles, Plymouth.” P. 15.

by this simple process he will at once justify himself, and cover his opponent with shame. Has Dr. Hawker done this? Has he even attempted to do it? No;—in no one instance has he proved his design or subject to have been in any manner *perverted*. The charge has been repeated by his advocates, but it has in no instance been verified. Even Mr. COLLYER—careless as he is about his credit for accuracy in these matters—has not attempted it *. But, as an example of Doctor

* In the paragraph which this gentleman inserted in all the public newspapers, to announce his *Doctorship of Divinity*, it was difficult to discover which was most conspicuous, the childish vanity of the Advertiser, or the degradation of the University whose prostituted favour it proclaimed. It was procured, he informs us, by the merit of his “LECTURES ON SCRIPTURE FACTS.” Can this be?—They must be little read in theology whom that work could have enlightened. If, indeed, it displayed the researches of a mind enriched by study, and enlightened by science, although in this there would be nothing rare, there would still be something to reward. Those who conferred honour upon such endeavours would, at least, not be disgraced. But to requite with a diploma a compiler who has added nothing to our knowledge, the very title of whose work is not grammatical †, who is indebted

† It should have been “Lectures on *Scriptural* Facts.” What should we think of the Grammarian, who, instead of *Historical*, should present us with “Lectures on *History* Facts.”

HAWKER'S reasoning, let us attend to the defence of his doctrine of the "natural inability of man to do the will of God," and the *illustration* by which he endeavours to rescue it from the objectionable consequences opposed to it.

"Do you really believe," says he, "that, because man by his apostasy hath lost his power and ability to obey, God hath lost his right to command? Would you carry this kind of reasoning into common life? Put the case that you were called upon, as a Barrister, to recover a debt due from one man to another, and you knew the debtor had not the ability to pay the *creditor*, would

for his materials to the labours of the Church Clergy, and whose work presents not one page of information that is original, nor one remark of importance that is new.—This is to make diplomas cheap indeed.

When strong native genius is united with profound erudition, it is wise to draw such talents from obscurity—if, indeed, their possessors can ever be obscure—and raise them to honourable distinction in the ranks of literature. DOCTOR JOHNSON did honour to the University of Oxford, from which he received his degree, and the University did itself honour in bestowing it. But the University of Edinburgh and DOCTOR Collyer !!! Really the thing is too ridiculous! It can only serve to render a Doctor's degree equivocal in future as a testimony of desert, and contemptible as a reward of learning.

you tell your client that his debtor was under no legal or moral obligation to pay what he had no power to do? And would you tell him that the very expectation of his just right *was as foolish as it was tyrannical?* Really, Sir, I should have thought your profession, as a BARRISTER, would have taught you better*.”

I have no doubt but that the Doctor conceived himself to have here put a case completely in point, and quite conclusive in favour of his doctrine. But that man must be a very feeble reasoner that does not instantly perceive the foolishness, as well as the fallacy, of this mode of statement. I will give my reply to these questions distinctly, and without hesitation. “If *you knew*,” says the Doctor, “that the debtor *had not the ability* to pay the creditor, would you tell your client that his debtor was under no legal † or *moral obligation* to pay what he had *no power to do?*” Most certainly I should. Suppose A to have lent B a thousand pounds;

* “A Second Letter,” &c. p. 73.

† The law *presumes* the capacity of payment when it enforces the duty.—The present is *solely* a question of *moral obligation*.

as a capital to commence trade, and that, when he purchased his stock to this amount, and lodged it in his warehouse, a fire were to break out in the next dwelling, and, extending itself to *his* warehouse, were to consume the whole of his property, and reduce him to a state of utter ruin. If A, my client, were to ask my opinion as to his right to recover from B, I should tell him that this his right would exist should B ever be in a condition to repay the sum borrowed ; and that if, by any unforeseen circumstances, B should *have it in his power* to repay it, he would be under a *moral obligation* so to do, but that the attempt to recover a thousand pounds from a man thus reduced, by accident, to utter ruin, and who had not a shilling left in the world, would *be as foolish as it was tyrannical*.

Again, suppose an artist to have borrowed from its possessor an original picture, by RUBENS, for the purpose of taking a copy Can any doubt exist of his obligation to return it? None surely. But suppose him to have lodged in the first floor of the house above

mentioned, and that the fire which consumed the premises had unfortunately consumed the picture also—Will any one still assert that the artist lies under a *moral obligation* to *return* it? Does not every man's common sense perceive, that, the *power* of returning it being thus taken away, the *obligation* is gone also?—A public Teacher of Religion, that could produce an instance so absurd to support a doctrine so erroneous, must either wilfully attempt to impose upon others, or he must egregiously impose upon himself.

The doctrines and principles which the Doctor maintains, and which are so stoutly defended and so strenuously taught by the whole *Evangelical* host, are calculated, by their perpetual repetition, to wear away, by degrees, every trace of moral feeling and of moral fear. Such are their influence and tendency upon their disciples *here*; what shall grow out of them to affect their salvation *hereafter*, who shall say?

When the spirit of the unrepentant sinner shall be summoned into judgment, let us suppose these questions to be put by HIM

who is appointed to judge the world in righteousness:—Whether he could not have abstained from the crimes which he committed? and why he did not?—Will he, at this most awful hour, dare to affirm that he could not forbear, for that he was created without any natural power of himself to do good, and that he therefore could not abstain from evil?—Will he dare, when standing at the bar of God, to fling such an imputation on his justice, as to declare that he never imparted to him *the ability* to fulfil those commands, for his disobedience to which he is called upon to answer?—If the reflective mind recoils at so impious an avowal, what must we think of those who teach such shocking tenets as the true doctrines of that religion of which they arrogantly style themselves the **EVANGELICAL MINISTERS**?

When, at this solemn tribunal, the sinner shall be called upon to answer for the transgression of those *moral* laws, on their obedience to which their salvation was made to depend, will it be sufficient, that, with unutterable terror and alarm, he declares himself

to have been taught, when on earth, to believe that the Gospel *had neither terms nor conditions*, and that his salvation was secured by a covenant which procured him pardon and peace, *from all eternity*; a covenant, the effects of which no folly or *after-act whatever* could possibly destroy?—Who could anticipate the sentence of condemnation, and not weep in agony over the deluded victim of ignorance and imposture, who was thus taught a doctrine so fatally false?

When the sound of the last trumpet shall call the guilty from the grave; when they shall awake in speechless consternation, and “shall see the dead, small and great, stand before God, and the book opened, which is the book of life; when the dead shall be judged out of those things which are written in the books, *according to their works**;”—with what anguish of heart will they then urge that they had been taught never to seek salvation *by their works*!!—that they had been led to neglect the *moral* duties of the

* Rev. xx. 12.

Gospel by the most earnest and repeated assurance of their earthly Teachers that their **RIGHTEOUSNESS** *would be no ground of their acceptance* with God!!!—that, on the contrary, their justification *had no connection with their PERSONAL obedience to the moral law*; and that, in the act of their justification, their performances *would not be taken into the account* *!!!—If the dreadful errors which have thus betrayed them into a false security should also bring down upon them the punishment denounced against their guilt; when, with the shriek of despair, they shall call upon the mountains to hide, and upon the rocks to cover them—where, where will *they* shelter themselves by whom millions have been thus drawn aside from the truth into a delusion which it will be then past their power to remedy or to expiate?!!

Doctor Hawker, like the rest of the propagators of these doctrines, takes shelter behind the **ARTICLES OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND**, thus making the Establishment an accom-

* Vide “Hints,” &c. Part i. p. 41, 44, 48, 59, 112.

plice in its own downfall. But admit for a moment—what I am very far from admitting in fact—that the pernicious principles thus disseminated in society are legitimately drawn from those Articles—still those who, for the sake of distinction, claim for themselves, exclusively, the title of GOSPEL Preachers, and EVANGELICAL Ministers, are bound to confirm them by that GOSPEL which those EVANGELISTS have left upon record. For either the doctrines which they preach are derived from the Gospel, or they are not. If they *are*, then they are capable of proof by that alone, and all reference to the Articles, as authority, becomes superfluous. If they *are not*, then the Articles can afford no conclusive evidence of the truth of any doctrine which the Gospel itself is not found to reveal, and all reference to them is therefore precluded.

The strongest and most leading feature in the *Law of Evidence* is this:—That the best evidence the nature of the case will admit must be produced, for if it appear that

better evidence might have been brought forward, the very circumstance of its being withheld furnishes suspicion that it would have prejudiced the party in whose power it was, had he produced it. When, therefore, we find these Tutors of Calvinistic Divinity resort for the support of their creed to the *Articles*, we may be sure that the *higher evidence* fails them.

The Reformers by whom those Articles were framed were educated in the Church of Rome, and opposed themselves rather to the perversion of its power, than the errors of its doctrine.

Amid the rancorous controversies of theology, by which that period of our history was alike distinguished and disgraced, moral philosophy, as a system, was little known. The abstruse subtleties of scholastic divinity absorbed all the leisure, and engaged all the talents, of the learned. Fine-spun distinctions, in which common sense was lost—doctrines which confounded the weak, and puzzled even the wise—occupied all that leisure

which should have been devoted to the advancement of moral science and the investigation of moral truth. Lord BACON was the first who dedicated his profound and penetrating genius to the cultivation of sound philosophy, and who taught us how best to improve those faculties which God has given to man for the perfection of his rational nature. Disgusted with the puerile, worthless, wire-drawn theories of the schools, he struck out that true path to knowledge which has since been a guide to the footsteps of subsequent philosophers. This extraordinary man appeared at an eclipse—the lustre of his mind threw its rays over the whole intellectual waste on which he stood. He taught his countrymen what regions of intellect best deserved to be explored, and in what manner to explore them. He moved, majestic and alone, amid the circle of the sciences. He instructed us so to apply our reason, as to elevate ourselves above the fooleries of vain, speculative, unprofitable, disputation. Since this period, that freedom of inquiry which has embraced all subjects has gra-

dually cleared the simple truths of Christianity from the errors and corruptions by which they have been disfigured; the creeds and confessions which grew out of the frauds of “political theologians, and theological politicians,” have been suffered to die away in the veneration of the reflective and the wise, who have been brought, at length, to esteem those as most orthodox who are most virtuous, and to be convinced that to love God, and to keep his commandments, is the best test of a TRUE BELIEVER. We look back to that era of our history when SUPERSTITION threw her victim on the pile, and BIGOTRY tied the martyr to his stake—but we take our eyes from the retrospect, and turn them in thankful admiration to that Being who has opened the minds of many, and is daily opening the minds of more amongst us, to the reception of these most important of all truths, that there is no true faith but in practical goodness, and that the worst of errors is the error of *the life*.

Such is the conviction of the most enlightened of our Clergy;—the conviction, I

trust, of the far greater part. They do not, therefore, feel it necessary to revive the exploded controversies which agitated, without purifying, the passions of the Divines of past days. They hold it more important to reform the vicious, and, after the example of their Divine Teacher, to exhort men to do justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with their God. They deem it better to inculcate the MORAL DUTIES of Christianity in the pure simplicity and clearness with which they are revealed, than to go aside in search of DOCTRINAL MYSTERIES. For as mysteries cannot be made manifest, they, of course, cannot be understood—and that which cannot be understood cannot be believed, and can, consequently, make no part of any system of FAITH; since no one, till he understands a doctrine, can tell whether it be true or false; till then, therefore, he can have no faith in it, for no one can rationally affirm that he believes that doctrine to be true which he does not know to be so; and he cannot know it to be true if he does not understand it.—In the religion of a true Christian, therefore,

there can be nothing unintelligible ; and if the Preachers of that religion do not make MYSTERIES, they will never find any

We shall discover, upon an attentive examination of the subject, that all those laws which lay the basis of our CONSTITUTIONAL liberties are no other than the rules of religion transcribed into the JUDICIAL system, and enforced by the sanction of civil authority. The divine law, as transmitted to us through the Gospel, is the source of all those fundamental maxims which constitute the code of our political freedom. It is the progressive influence of Christian *morality* that has improved, imperceptibly, the character of man, and the system of his government ; and it is to a departure from its dictates that we can alone ascribe the present desolate and degraded condition of civilized Europe. We have seen—thank God we have seen it at a distance, but we ought to profit for ever by the lesson—that it is neither more nor less than a disregard of all *moral principle* that produced that *reign of* TERROR, which, in France, subjected a whole kingdom

to the terrific dominion of a single Tyrant. It was so under ROBESPIERRE. It is so still —The end is not yet.

Surely there is enough of evil principle at present afloat in the world to render it unnecessary for any PRIESTHOOD, of any denomination, to destroy all excitement to practical goodness, by withdrawing mankind from all reliance upon it as the ground of their hope of happiness in the world to come; or, to use their own words, to deny it to be in any manner efficacious “ as the procuring cause of salvation.”

But it is urged by some—who seem not insensible to the present effects nor to the future consequences of the doctrines—which bear the insinuating name of *Evangelical*—that, be the *nature* and *effect* of those doctrines what they may, the *Legislature* ought not to be addressed on the subject. I owe it to those who think thus to state my opinion somewhat explicitly on this head.

The objection appears to me to assume what is by no means true—that to address the Legislature is to call in the aid of *power*

to correct the errors of *opinion*. What! have then the associated Guardians of the Commonwealth no *legitimate* means of preserving the moral order and prosperity of the People and the State? Can REASON find no remedy, or POLICY suggest no regulation, that can be reconciled to the law of the Constitution, or to the spirit of its freedom? If the evil could not be reformed or mitigated without some such sacrifice, the public interest would indeed be very ill provided for

Opinions, however false, can never be refuted by pains and penalties. Persecution never yet enlightened the understanding or refuted the arguments of any man. No Magistrate on earth has a right to enter the sacred retirement of conscience, and say what religious doctrines a man shall either admit into, or strike out of, his creed. But here a question occurs which demands to be answered with caution, and which we cannot come prepared to decide upon without much profound and steady reflection. It is not a question to be answered by common-place

flourishes in favour of freedom of thought, and the right of private judgment. This freedom and this right are admitted unequivocally, and to the full; but they have no concern with the inquiry that remains behind, which is this—Admitting the right of the individual to retain his religious opinions, whatever they may be, without any corrective interference on the part of the State, can he also claim a right to instil those opinions into the mind of every other subject of which that State is composed?—I trust I know the value of freedom, and that, should the occasion call for it, I should not be wanting in exertion to defend it; but it is because I value it highly that I would not express myself at random on any question connected with the enjoyment of it. My opinion on the subject is this—Where a man holds a certain system of doctrines, the State is bound to tolerate, though it may not approve, them; but when he demands *a license to teach* this system to the rest of the community, he demands that which ought not to be granted incautiously and without grave consideration. This discretion-

ary power is delegated in trust for the common good; and to give permission to all persons, indiscriminately, to spread doctrines destructive in their tendency to the moral interests of the public, is to act in disobedience to the public safety. The argument applies to political as well as to religious opinions. A man may, from the peculiar bent of his historical inquiries, or from whatever other cause, have persuaded himself that a Republican form of Government is preferable to that mixed system which prevails in the British Constitution, and I know no earthly authority that could be justified in disturbing his conviction; but when, not content with the free and unmolested enjoyment of it, he asserts his *right* to inculcate this persuasion on the multitude, and to bring them to reject the principles of that system under which they live, in favour of those which he has himself embraced—I confess I am not aware of any legitimate authority under which such a right can be claimed.

In like manner, if a man be an Infidel, I know of no Defender of the Faith that is,

or ought to be, invested with a power to compel him to become a convert to Christianity. It would be injustice to attempt it. He is amenable to a higher Tribunal, and has no Judge beneath the skies. But if this Infidel, should demand permission from the State to teach every where, that good works were in no wise essential towards procuring salvation hereafter—that no future punishment awaited the wicked, for that the punishment due to sinners was already suffered, and the penalty of their offences paid—that those who committed crimes in this world would be treated as righteous *by imputation* in the next, and that personal righteousness was *filthy rags*—those to whom the care of the Commonwealth was entrusted would not, I apprehend, be bound to grant him *a license* to pervert the minds and corrupt the morals of the people, by publicly teaching these destructive theories. This is not *a permit* to be demanded as a matter of course. The State cannot consistently grant it. It has no authorized power, under the Constitution, so to do; because it has no power to put in

hazard the moral welfare of the Community, whose interests are in its hands. In matters of Religion, every one has a right to exercise and to enjoy his own private judgment, however weak or erroneous; but the Legislature may justly withhold from any one a license to infect the *public judgment* with errors fatal to the *public interest*.

Errors, resulting from the honest imperfection of his own reason, no man can help. The faculties of his mind may, perhaps, become more mature; exercise may extend, and inquiry may enlighten, them. Should exercise and inquiry fail to do this, persecution should in no wise be resorted to. Punishment is just as proper a remedy for a diseased limb as for a defective understanding. None but a Fool or a Tyrant would think of applying it. But, because error ought not to be *punished* by the Legislature, it does not follow that it ought to be *patronised*.

But here it will be asked—since the public must have Religious Teachers, who shall decide on the truth or falsehood of the doctrines they deliver? This question is too general to

admit of a very precise answer, but thus much I think may be said in reply to it. The leading aim of RELIGION, and the avowed purpose for which it was revealed, was most clearly this—to teach mankind their duty to God and to each other; and the great and important object of all its *doctrines* is to furnish the highest and most powerful *motives* to the discharge of that duty. To this end, the resurrection from the dead, and a state of future rewards and punishments—the strongest incitements to human action—were placed as first truths in front of the lesson of REVELATION.—A promise of pardon is held forth to reformed penitents, and this world is represented as being a stage of preparation and a state of trial for another, in which, according as we acquit ourselves well or ill, we shall receive hereafter, from the final Judge of all the earth, our recompense of reward or condemnation.—Now these are DOCTRINES that can never be too forcibly nor too frequently pressed upon our attention; and some precaution ought at least to be taken that counter-doctrines are not circulated throughout the whole extent of the kingdom, that virtually

deny the existence and actually destroy the efficacy of these first and most important truths.

I can concede, most amply and without reserve, to every man the privilege of judging and deciding for himself, on every subject that can occupy the human mind *.

* I had not heard till just now that Mr. COLLYER had published an *Appendix* to his Appeal on the Subject of Evangelical Preaching. I really find nothing in it which deserves notice, and yet, as I understand, it waited upwards of a month from the finishing, that his name might issue forth with the dignified appendage of D. D. ! It would betray want of courtesy, after this, to pass it by without remark. Yet I must confess, that even now, and bearing as he does “this *blushing* honour,” I cannot find either that his vanity is less, or that his wisdom is greater. But, perhaps, the one will abate, and the other abound, *by degrees*; we will, therefore, leave them to events.

The *Doctor* is welcome to any grammatical *reprisals* he may make; but his attempt in p. 16 and 17 of his Appendix is sadly unsuccessful. I had not stated the authorities as *distinct*, but I *distinctly* stated them, to shew their *coincidence*, and with respect to the article *it*, the antecedent is “the express information of our Saviour.” This *Dignitary* is not *grammaticæ artis DOCTISSIMUS*—but no matter.

The *Doctor* complains that I dismissed his APPEAL with too slight a notice, and that I did not treat him with due respect. I can assure him, that had he fairly met the statements which he professedly came forward to oppose—had he proved that the practical application of the doctrines which he undertook to defend was not what I had affirmed them to be—had he shewn that the principles

I can concede to every man the right of laying the conscientious result of his judgment before the public, on every subject that can interest the feelings or the fate of man. But when we behold a vast body of men separating themselves from the mass of their fellow-subjects, and assiduously disseminating opinions adverse to the morals of

advanced by the writers I referred to were erroneously stated, or that the conclusions deduced from them were untruly drawn—had he demonstrated that *their* assertions, and the declarations of the *Saviour himself*, which I opposed to them, were not what I had declared them to be, contradictory. but corroborative and consistent—Had he done this, and I had afterwards treated his labours with levity and disrespect, a conduct so unworthy on my part would only have added a lustre to his triumph. The strength of an argumentative and powerful mind will assert its own claim, and force its own way; to consign over its efforts to derision or contempt is beyond the power of me, or of any man; but when *Doctor COLLYER* poured forth his flippant and evasive declamation, seasoned with epithets of high invective, and—thinking more of himself than his subject—talked of “feeling a sort of *degradation* in replying to an anonymous writer,” and affected to regret that he should “*condescend to rescue him from oblivion*,” with much more of this sort of coxcombry and nonsense; and when he, in no one instance, compensates for the silliness of his pride by the strength of his reasoning; if I should not have treated his *self-importance* with due ceremony, or should have manifested a want of reverence for his *incapacity*—the occasion is with himself.

the people ;—when we perceive these men perverting that Gospel which they pretend *exclusively* to propagate, and spreading doctrines that, while they tend to bring *morality* into neglect and disesteem, are pregnant with every principle that can deprave the ignorant and misguide the unthinking ;—when we remark their restless activity, their ceaseless ardour, their hot-brained zeal ;—when we find their agents and emissaries traversing every quarter of the globe, and perceive this confederacy growing daily to a gigantic energy and strength ; when we observe them assuming a title, which, while it distinguishes them from the National Church, serves at once to designate their separation and their supremacy ;—when we discern this very title to be itself a standing libel against the Established Order of Clergy in the State ;—when we mark their ascendancy every hour gaining ground, and the national character rapidly degenerating under their influence ;—when we view the multitude seduced from the Teachers of Christian MORALITY by every art which bigotry and cunning can suggest ;—

when we behold the Leaders of this hostile sect no longer content with being tolerated, but aspiring *to take the lead*, and succeeding to an extent that menaces the State by whose protection they were fostered;—when we witness in the Members of this New Ecclesiastical Republic a spirit that is fierce, fanatical, and intolerant, full of impatience towards all who doubt, and full of wrath towards all who differ;—when we discover the bulk of their followers drawn from the lowest rank of intellect, trained to an allegiance to their Sect and its Spiritual Leaders;—when we behold ASSOCIATIONS in every county in England, and a CONGREGATIONAL UNION projected for the purpose of bringing the whole mass into contact, and giving energy and effect to its operations;—when we turn our eye to the REPORT of the Deputies appointed by this New Spiritual Regency to take a survey of the religious state of IRELAND—a precedent unknown to the history of the British Constitution;—when we perceive the followers of this aspiring sect separating themselves from

their fellow-citizens in all the common connections, habits, and relations of life, and cherishing the coldest feelings of dislike towards all from whom they are thus dissociated, and who are not disciplined in *their* corps;—when we call to mind that this sect, infuriate in their thirst for proselytism, disdain all appeal to *reason*, in matters of FAITH, and in consequence leave themselves no appeal but to *force*;—when we recollect, in the train of all this, that an EVANGELICAL sect, of exactly the same views and principles, and habits, and doctrines—a party out of which this party has grown, and from which it has descended, HAS ONCE BEFORE OVERTHROWN THE STATE.—With all this present to our minds, are we prepared to say, that we find nothing in all this but what is necessarily attendant on the *right of private judgment*; nor any thing which, consistently with the enjoyment of that right, can be either regulated or restrained? If any are of opinion that all this ought to proceed in its course, and that to bring it in any manner under the notice or knowledge of the ex-

isting Government is to offer violation to the privileges of *religious freedom*—If any are of this opinion, I freely confess that I am not of that number.

Whether a *license* ought indiscriminately, and without care or inquiry, to be granted to any, even the lowest of the vulgar, to take an active lead in this CHURCH MILITANT; and whether he should, moreover, be lured to enlist into its service by an exemption from certain burdens which attach to every other class of subjects,—the policy of all this, to say the least of it, seems very questionable. If an evil approaches us, against which all precaution would be fruitless, in this case our fate is our apology;—so situated, we are obliged to acquiesce;—but it were an extreme of indifference, approaching to insanity, to become the careless accomplices of our own ruin. If the LEGISLATURE, instead of considering on the means of repressing the danger which menaces the Establishment and the State, shall lend its authority to the cause; still it is of importance that we should know what is our true

situation, that our minds may be gradually made up to the event.

When I read all the insinuations contained in certain publications, of very extensive circulation and impressive effect—when I consider amongst what order of persons those publications are assiduously spread, and the zeal and authority with which they are recommended—I think I perceive a disposition very much the reverse of that which would respect the public welfare, if the turn of affairs gave a chance of subverting the constituted authority of the CHURCH, and establishing, in its stead, the supremacy of the NEW PRIESTHOOD. A very popular work, entitled “A PLEA FOR RELIGION,” written by a Minister of *the* ESTABLISHMENT, seduced into the circle of METHODISM, manifests, but too clearly the views of the New Spiritual Directory. The book itself is well calculated to accelerate those views. It seeks, in alliance with the publications of ROWLAND HILL, and other strenuous Evangelists of the same stamp, to purify the Constitution from that public grievance, an ESTABLISHED CLERGY,

and to clear out the MORAL TEMPLE to make room for the Assembly of THE SAINTS.

This writer descants, with a zeal peculiarly exasperated, against the Dignitaries of the Church *. The Luminaries of METHODISM are contrasted with the REGULAR CLERGY, and the former are found, in the comparison, to be as shining stars in the firmament of Faith. So far as *these* have obtained admission into the Church, so far, and just in that proportion, it is *Evangelical* and pure; but beyond that it is corrupt, unholy, profligate, and not worth preserving.—“In my judgment,”—says this *converted* Divine,—“the corrupt state of the *Established Religion* is the grand and original cause of much of our immorality; and these two, together, are the only true and genuine sources of our national distress. Let us remove out of the way every *unevangelical* stumbling-block, and turn unto

* The late Dr. LAW, Bishop of CARLISLE, is singled out by name, as one upon whom Church preferment was undeservedly accumulated. The Bishop was an elegant scholar, and a most enlightened and liberal Divine; these qualities were, of themselves, sufficient to him make a subject of fanatical reproach, but they were, at the same time, sufficient to elevate him above the reach of it.

God in good earnest, and he will soon make our enemies to be at peace with us. Could this be done, the throne of *King George* should be as the days of Heaven *.”

I really doubt much whether the throne of King George will be much better supported by the LUMBER-TROOP of Methodists, than it is by the REGULARS whom they so proudly depreciate, and whom they are so forward to vilify and reproach.

The prodigious increase of this sect is ascribed to the first followers of WHITFIELD and WESLEY not having been duly patronised and supported by the BISHOPS and CLERGY :—“ Instead,” says this writer, “ of *encouraging*, moderating, and regulating, the pious zeal of a few young men in *Oxford*, by gentle and lenient measures, they shut their Churches against them, and compelled them to go out into the highways and hedges, to preach to those who were inclined to hear them ; and though they were *then* but

* “ A Plea for Religion and the Sacred Writings. By the late REV. DAVID SIMPSON, Member of Christ Church, Macclesfield. FIFTH EDITION. 1808.” P. 226.

a small band, they are *now* become A GOODLY COMPANY, and have already *overspread* ENGLAND, SCOTLAND, IRELAND, AMERICA, and the WEST INDIES.—All this weight, too, is thrown into the *dissenting* scale! A few more such imprudent measures—and down goes *Mother CHURCH* *!”

This language is not very eloquent or respectful; but the representation is certainly correct. There is no doubt but these Spiritual Missionaries have been sufficiently successful, and that their embassies of *alienation* have met with no obstacles in the wisdom or policy of the States they have *overspread*. That *Paine*, and others of Republican notoriety, whose hostility to the existing Government was open and avowed, should predict, in language of insulting mockery, the downfall of MOTHER CHURCH, could occasion no surprise; but surely that ordinary decency, which even hypocrisy demands, might have forbid a Professor of RELIGION from treating its public institutions with contempt, and

* “Plea for Religion,” &c. P. 271.

poisoning the minds of his countrymen against the Establishment provided for the support of it.—This, surely, makes no part of the duty intrusted to the hands of *Gospel* Ministers.

As this reverend *Proselyte* had concluded upon *withdrawing* from the Church, and joining the Methodist connection, he does not hesitate to declare decisively the steps which ought to be pursued; and the sentiments which he has deliberately expressed on this subject demand attention. ROWLAND HILL and his confederates could not have had a better Ally, or one more hearty in the cause.

“As matters are *now* managed,” says he, “a large proportion, both of our BISHOPS and CLERGY, are, in a very considerable degree, *an useless burden upon the public*. We not only do little or no good. but we do *a great deal of harm*. While we continue dead to the interests of religion, subscribe what we do not approve, and set the pulpit and reading-desk at loggerheads one with the other; while our doctrines are *unevangelical*, our spirit lukewarm, our minds se-

cular and worldly, our studies merely literary or philosophical, and our conduct immoral; *far better would it be that the nation were without us, and all our preferments SEQUESTERED to the purposes of THE STATE, as they respectively become vacant, and the people left to provide at their own expense for Ministers, as it is among all denominations of Dissenters.* In this case, Ministers, in general, would both be better provided for, the people would be better served, the Government would gradually obtain considerable sums of money to aid them in their efforts to save the country, and all the dumb dogs, the useless and immoral part of the Clergy, *would be sent a-packing, one to his farm, and another to his merchandize.* Can any rational man say that this would be *a misfortune* to the nation? At least, were I in the PRIME MINISTER'S place, and *wanted to raise money for the salvation of the kingdom, as it is well known he must do, I should certainly turn my attention* TO THE PROPERTY OF THE CHURCH*.”

* “Plea for Religion,” &c. Appendix, p. 383.

Under what law of the Constitution would this Methodist Minister OF STATE justify this *sequestration*? Under what *Plea for Religion* would he empty the spoils of the Church into the new BANK of FAITH, and build Conventicles with the confiscated revenues of the Establishment? Under what pious pretext would he sanction the violation of those steady principles of justice which are the sole security of property amongst us?—I trust the rights of property will never fall under the management of these Saintly Sequestrators. Some persons are fearful of becoming eventually the victims of FRENCH oppression; I have no objection to any fears, however unfounded, that suggest precaution;—but to be absorbed in the dread of a distant evil, and entirely to abstract our attention from a danger that is at our doors, is neither considerate nor safe. If the rattle of the distant serpent warns us to beware, so likewise does the hiss of the adder that is writhing at our heels.

We have seen the spirit of reforming fury with which the fanatics of France laid their

axe to the root of all prescriptive right and of all public law.—“ You may suppose,” says Mr. BURKE, referring to the deplorable consequences of their fraudulent and cheating zeal, “ you may suppose that we do not approve your confiscation of the revenues of Bishops, and Deans, and Chapters, and parochial Clergy, possessing independent estates arising from land, because we have the same sort of Establishment in England. That objection, you will say, cannot hold, as to the confiscation of the goods of Monks and Nuns, and the abolition of their order. It is true that this particular part of your general confiscation does not affect us in England, as a precedent in point; but the reason applies, and it goes a great way. The LONG PARLIAMENT *confiscated* the lands of Deans and Chapters in England on the same ideas upon which your assembly set to sale the lands of the Monastic Orders. But it is in *the principle of injustice* that *the danger lies*, and not in the *description of persons* on whom it is *first* exercised.—If prescription be once shaken, no species of property is secure when

it once becomes an object large enough to tempt the cupidity of *indigent* POWER. I see a practice perfectly correspondent to their contempt of this great fundamental part of natural law. I see the confiscators *begin* with Bishops, and Chapters, and Monasteries; but I do not see them *end* there* ”

This is the warning voice of real wisdom. It is not enough to say that men who circulate such principles mean well. It is no compensation, nor is it any apology, that the zeal which destroyed *us*, first deluded *itself*. The work of ruin is the same; and, as the same profound and philosophic statement most truly remarks,—“ Of all things, Wisdom is the most terrified with epidemic Fanaticism, because of all enemies it is that against which she is the least able to furnish any kind of resource.”

The rapid increase of a powerful sect, composed, as the Methodists † are composed,

* “ Letter on the French Revolution,” p. 325.

† This sect was formerly divided into the *Calvinistic* and *Armenian*, and both parties were full of hate and hostility towards each other, as their controversial writings

and separated, as it were, from the great mass of the Community, presents an object of deep interest to the contemplation of a reflective mind. It offers—and this, of itself, if it existed alone, is an evil of great magnitude—it offers *an organized mass of power and authority* ready prepared to the hands of any intriguing and desperate LEADER that has art and enterprize sufficient to take advantage of it. CROMWELL put himself at the head of the PURITANS; he found in them the very engine he wanted, and he had address enough to turn their zeal to good account. The present Tyrant of France—compared with whom the character of Cromwell is pure and spotless—would not fail to pay his court to a power so well fitted to be made the instrument of his ambition as that Spiritual Order which overspreads the kingdom through all its borders. He would carry on the *Godly* work of reformation with an exclusive indulgence to the

sufficiently testify. But of late years they have found it expedient to form a *coalition*, and the ESTABLISHMENT has now to resist their combined force.

pious of this sect ; and we should, perhaps, have, in some Manifesto to the Parliament of England, a repetition of the *curious Answer* presented by him to the Address of the Corregidor of MADRID:—"I have preserved the SPIRITUAL ORDERS, but with a limitation of the number of Monks. There is not a single intelligent person who is not of opinion that they are too numerous. Those of them who are influenced by a *divine call* shall remain in their cloisters. With regard to those whose *call* was *doubtful*, I have fixed their condition in the order of Secular Priests *"—

If any subtle agent of sedition, by a pretended attachment to those principles which unite this formidable sect, should place himself among the foremost and most enthusiastic of their followers, what a prodigious physical force is placed within his grasp. An intriguing man of talents, full of ambition and full of energy, with such a power at his devotion—and at his devotion it

* See the "ANSWER presented to the ADDRESS to his Majesty the Emperor, by the Corregidor of Madrid, in the name of the Magistracy and Citizens of that Capital."—Dated December 9, 1808.

would be placed by the sure ascendancy which his talents would gain—such a man, so seconded, what might he not accomplish? They would be proud of such a convert to their order. It would be to them a test of the truth of their opinions, that they were espoused by one of such high mental endowments. They would readily identify themselves with so illustrious an adherent, and would look upon every accession to his greatness as an augmentation of their own power, and they would rejoice in and promote it accordingly. When such a leader as I have adverted to shall have fully organized his authority, and made it in all things compact—where we are to look for the opposing balance is more than I know.

I do not say that such a termination is looked to, or that it is even within the forecast of the order of persons I speak of. But all who are studied in the history of Governments, and of human affairs, know this—that when a great change is gradually preparing in the condition of any people, all the events that may follow in the train of

that change are not distinctly foreseen. An aspiring and dextrous individual—and every great kingdom furnishes many such—who has long watched the movements of other minds, and lain wait for some favourable vicissitude, rushes sometimes on a sudden out of the ranks of society, and seizes hold on circumstances which his less daring associates could neither mould nor manage. He winds himself into the centre, while they are pacing the circle. The mass of his followers are brought under his management, and he thus gains full possession of that power which those who *created* could not *control*.—He keeps his eye upon events—he profits by conjunctures—till at length he rides upon the whirlwind, while they, who were at first the *unconscious* instruments of his elevation, become, in the end, either the victims of his cunning, or the partners of his crime.

CROMWELL gave in to all the prejudices of his party, and accommodated himself to the sanctified hue and temper of the times. The cant of religion rounded all his periods.

HIS SPEECH, on dissolving the Parliament, is a complete specimen of that hypocritic tone of piety in which he conducted his usurpation, and by which he imposed on the superstitious imbecility of the multitude. It commences in the modern strain of Methodism:—

—“I had very *comfortable* expectations that *God* would make the meeting of this Parliament *a blessing*, and, the Lord *be my witness*, I desired the carrying on the affairs of the nations to these ends. The blessing which I mean, and which we ever climbed at, was mercy, truth, righteousness, and peace, and which I desire may be improved.”—Then comes the cant of humility, and a profession of his own peaceful and *unambitious* temper, in which he affects a reluctance to accept the burden of that Government which he was secretly determined to usurp.—“I can say,” says he, “*in the presence of God*, in comparison with whom we are but like poor creeping ants upon the earth, I would have been glad to have lived under my wood-side, to have kept a flock of sheep,

rather than undertook such a Government as this; but undertaking it by the advice and petition of you, I did look that you that had offered it unto me should make it good.”— And he winds up the whole of this *righteous* oration to the Parliament with these words: —“I think it high time *that an end be put unto your sitting*, and let God judge between you and me*.”

Such was the *Evangelical* sanctity of CROMWELL! who never forgot to represent *his* cause as the *cause of God*. His son RICHARD, who succeeded him in the PROTECTORATE, furnishes us with a still more perfect sample of the current cant of the SAINTS in his time; it is curious to remark how exactly it accords with the strains of their sanctified posterity of the present day:—

—“The *cause of God* and these nations,” says he, in his Speech on the Meeting of Parliament, “*which my father was engaged in*, met, in all the parts of it, as you well know, with many enemies and great opposition.

* See. “Hatsell’s Collection of Parliamentary Speeches,” vol. i. p. 151.

Archers, privily and openly, sorely grieved him, and shot at him; yet his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob.—As to himself, he died full of days spent in great and sore travail; yet his eyes were not waxed dim, neither was his natural strength abated, as was said of Moses. He was serviceable even to the last.—As to these nations, he left them in great honour abroad, and in full peace at home; all England, Scotland, and Ireland, dwelling safely, every man under his vine, and under his fig-tree, from Dan even to Beer-sheba * ”—

No doubt the *serious hearers* greeted this pious harangue with many *groanings* of approbation. There were some in the congregation, however, who listened to it with ears less erect. They had sit too long *under the sound* of this sort of pulpit eloquence; they grew tired of the farce. RICHARD predicted the consequence, and, finding himself unable to curb the steed which his father had trained, he wisely resigned the reins.

* See “Hatsell’s Collection,” &c. p. 154.

It is profitable to advert to history, and to retrace old times. The record of the past is full of interest, and it is full of instruction. It contains what the wisest of our forefathers have written “for our learning.” There is much before our eyes to which it is fruitful of application.—I have by no means said all that might be said on the different topics upon which I have touched. I have thrown but a sketch upon the canvas—more reflective minds will fill up the outline.

END OF PART THE THIRD.

